

# Joe Bently NAVAL CADET.



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HE RAN WITH ALL HIS MIGHT ACROSS THE DECK.

# JOE BENTLY

NAVAL CADET

BY

H. H. CLARK, U. S. NAVY.

AUTHOR OF BOY LIFE IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY, ETC.



BOSTON  
D LOTHROP COMPANY

WASHINGTON STREET OPPOSITE BROMFIELD

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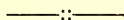
TO THE NAVAL CADETS OF THE UNITED STATES SHIPS  
TRENTON AND LANCASTER

With whom I have recently been abroad in the world, in sincere appreciation of their manly character and professional ability, and with the hope for each of them of an honorable career in the service of their country, this story of a cadet's life in the Navy is respectfully dedicated by the Author.





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# JOE BENTLY, NAVAL CADET.

## CHAPTER I.

### JOE AT THE NAVAL ACADEMY.

FOUR swift, happy, hard-working years have passed, and our old friend and hero, Joe Bently, is no longer a cadet at the United States Naval Academy, Annapolis. We took our leave of Joe, it will be remembered, alongside the *Messageries Imperiales* steamer at Smyrna, Turkey, about to sail for Marseilles. Aside from his grief at parting from his ship and shipmates, we find him now more elated, if possible, over his successful graduation than over the eventful and happy fortune attending his appointment to the Academy. Joe has done well. A few of his class have maintained a higher average in languages, but in English studies and mathematics, he has taken second rank. In strictly professional branches, however — such as seamanship, ordnance, steam engineering, etc., and in all drills — none has exceeded him.

He has also been very popular, alike with the cadets, officers, and professors. He has never been guilty of hazing, and woe has befallen several boys who in their innocence attempted to haze him. He has not been a perfect boy, but judged by a fair standard of boyish propriety, he has at all times during his course, in character and conduct, preserved excellent standing.

Now, on the evening of his release from the stern tutelage and supervision of his instructors, he is sauntering along that part of the shore comprised in the Academy grounds, meditating upon the happy years that have flown, and prospecting on what, in the way of duty, will come next. A leave of absence is about to be granted him, which, in the case of cadets is necessarily short, owing to the exigences of the Service, and the need of thoroughly equipping them with the knowledge of an officer's duties and responsibilities at sea.

The sun is nearly set, and we can scarcely refrain from a critical survey of Master Joe's person as he stands, or rather jaunts along, in the slanting light. He has nearly reached the dimensions of manhood. Tall, rather slender than otherwise, solidly knit, set up with military precision but without stiffness, freckles all scoured out, a slight appearance about the lip faintly suggesting a mustache, a marked ease of bearing, all of

which, together with a quiet, genial manner, unite in a combination of details that make Joe an unusually presentable young cadet.

Joe is not alone. A classmate not far from his own age and size accompanies him. This young gentleman is also quite noticeable. Without, perhaps, being strikingly handsome, he is exceedingly good-looking. He is a bright-eyed, round-faced, jovial fellow; has a fine figure, shown to its best advantage by its thorough military setting up, and is very sprightly in all his movements and conversation. He looks like a very daring, impetuous young fellow, and, taken all in all, produces a most agreeable impression. The two boys have been very warm friends ever since they entered the Academy. His name is Harry Edgerton, and he is just now sounding Joe as to his preference for sea duty. Joe is giving a decided expression in favor of the old cruising ground, so full of pleasant and thrilling memories.

"I prefer China or the South Pacific," said Harry. "No European or home squadron for me," he added with emphasis. "I got enough of home cruising in the *Constellation* and *Dale*, and I don't care to see Europe till I'm high up on the list."

"That will be a very long time," remarked Joe, laughing at Harry's allusion to the Navy Register. "We've got to be cadets two years yet."

"Well, I don't much care," said Harry. "I suppose I got my ideas up on the Ouranos. But didn't we just have a jolly time in her?"

This observation was followed by a deluge of reminiscences. The Ouranos was a fine steam yacht owned by Harry's father. He had permitted Harry, during his last summer vacation, to go on a cruise in through the sound and along the coast as far as Bar Harbor and Eastport, inviting as many of his young friends and classmates as he saw fit to accompany him. The cruise was a glorious one, the yacht having been well handled. After being practically master of the yacht, though for so short a time, we do not wonder at Harry's ambitious reference to the "navy list."

"Wouldn't it be a stroke of luck if we should get orders to the same ship?" resumed Harry.

"Couldn't be anything better," replied Joe. "The chance is very much in our favor, too."

"How's that?"

"Why, don't you see? The whole class numbers thirty, and they probably won't send less than six to any single ship. That gives us one chance in five for being together."

"So it does," said Harry. "But I hope they won't send us to one of the big ships. A little ship, a roving commission, a lively old war, and a shipwreck, figure up my nautical aspirations for the next two years."



"No doubt the Navy Department can accommodate you with everything but the war," laughed Joe. "Perhaps they may throw that in after a while, too. You're all right for the shipwreck. They say they've got to put hoops on some of the ships to hold them together another cruise. But here comes Schopenhauer."

Both cadets turned sharply about to get a good look at the new comer, who was hurrying to overtake them.

A certain comical cheerlessness about Schopenhauer made him more welcome than otherwise. His real name was Swem, but owing to his lugubrious and pessimistic way of looking at things the cadets had dubbed him with the significant name of Schopenhauer. It had been literally tacked upon him, for he had found it one morning fastened to his blouse with brass-headed nails. The most noticeable thing about this cadet was that he seemed, in nautical phrase, very much down by the head. A wrong distribution of weights in his nature, so to speak, had left him fatally cast down. Even his voice persisted in the falling inflection.

"What's the matter now, Schopy?" called Joe. Schopy was the cadet's abridgement of Schopenhauer.

"I'm taking my last look round," Swem answered, coming to a halt.

"Why, you going to resign?" asked Joe and Harry together.

Swem's one hope was to get out of the Navy, which he cordially hated.

"No such good luck. But I'll probably be ordered to Panama or the coast of Africa, and I might as well be dead."

"Oh, you won't die," exclaimed Harry, bringing his hand hard down on Swem's shoulder and whirling him completely round. "You're not the kind that goes off easily. Besides, you're an equatorial plant. Don't you see how you droop, and how shady you are?"

"Come, come, Schopy, cheer up," said Joe, very kindly. "You mustn't take such a gloomy view of things."

"Well," continued Swem, "I don't like the prospect. I would resign in a minute if it wasn't for my father. He thinks I'm made in the Navy. The speakers to-day in the chapel all thought so, too. If they could only see the Government's wards, as they called us, three weeks from now going for sand" —

"Or milk for the Admiral's baby," interrupted Harry, with an air of comical depression.

"It isn't becoming in us to want to pick our stations, or to speak slightly of our duties when we're just out of the Academy," said Joe.

"That's all very well for you fellows who'll be

Coburgers all your lives, to say. You'll get the best thing, anyway."

"We don't want to be Coburgers. And we've just been saying we don't want the best thing," said Joe warmly. "The harder our duty is at first the better."

"I only ask for something that will wake me up—stir my blood," remarked Harry, "whether it's at the Equator or the North Pole."

"Good evening, young gentlemen," pleasantly observed some one hitherto unnoticed. "Won't you join us in our walk?"

The cadets recognized the voice as that of Commander ——, commandant of cadets. They wheeled quickly, bringing their hands to their caps in a prompt salute. Fearing that their conversation might have been overheard, they confronted the commandant with a slight air of embarrassment. But he showed no sign of having caught a word. Like themselves, he was out for a stroll, accompanied by his wife and two little daughters. The commandant was widely known as a distinguished officer of the Navy. His ideal of his profession was very high, and while endeavoring to realize it in his own official character, he sought earnestly to impress it upon the cadets. They all held him in the highest admiration and respect. He had won Joe's esteem especially, and had been to him an inspiring example of what

may be achieved by devotion to study and duty. Just now he was enthusiastic over the efforts being made in Congress to rehabilitate the Navy.

"I presume you're anxious to get away, now," the commandant observed as the cadets joined the party. "Your orders are here ; they came by the afternoon mail."

"May I take the liberty of asking what they are, sir?" respectfully inquired Joe.

"Oh, the customary orders: directing you to proceed to your home, and hold yourself in readiness for sea-duty."

"Thank you, sir," responded Joe.

"By the way" pursued the commandant, Commander Farradale has requested me to use my influence to get some three or four of the graduating class assigned to his ship. She's small, but quite new, and has modern appliances."

Unobserved by the commandant, the three cadets glanced at one another significantly.

"If any, or all of you, would like to go, I think I can arrange it for you," continued the commandant.

"We'd like very much to go, sir," impulsively answered Harry.

"Yes, sir, we would indeed," said Swem, suddenly brightening up as the Panama and African spectres went down under the commandant's proposition.

Joe very modestly expressed his pleasure, and asked if the ship referred to did not have the latest improvements in ordnance, etc.

"Late, but not the latest," returned the commandant. "I hope you will not be very far up on the list before we have new ships, new guns — in fact a new Navy in every sense of the word."

"It looks as if we'll have to be alive to keep up with the advance of naval science," said Joe.

"You will, indeed! I know of no profession more exacting. I see no leisure for the future naval officer. The Navy has grown to be practically a school of science."

"Just think of the things not strictly belonging to the profession that we have to make ourselves proficient in," said Harry; "history, international law, languages, and their like."

"Yes," laughed the commandant, "an officer must have a good knowledge of history, be an accomplished linguist, and quite an able jurist; he must know how to sail a ship, fight a battle, take charge of an ordnance foundry, conduct an astronomical observatory, and escort a queen over the ship's side."

The cadets all laughed heartily over this summary of an officer's duties and accomplishments.

"I thought the remarks of the Secretary of the Navy, just before he handed us our diplomas, very much to the point, too, sir," resumed Joe.

"O yes! You mean that part of his address in which he spoke of the Navy in its representative capacity. It is true, as he said, that the people of other nations will judge of the country about as they judge of you. The Navy has moral and intellectual as well as military significance."

"I beg pardon, sir," said Harry, interrupting the conversation, "I think the orderly is coming now with our orders."

All looked in the direction indicated by Harry, and saw the superintendent's orderly hastily approaching them, holding a package of papers in his hand. The superintendent, realizing the brief stay the cadets would be able to make at their homes, had sent his orderly out of office hours to deliver their orders.

A glance at the papers sufficed. The contents were of the agreeable nature already disclosed. Bidding the commandant a hasty good-by, without having forgotten, however, to first thank him for his helpful interest in them, they started off with no little celerity for their valises and the train: Swem to catch the Chicago night express from Baltimore, and Harry and Joe the Pullman for New York, whence, next morning, Joe would start for his home in Maine, paying a promised visit to the Astons in Portland, on the way.

## CHAPTER II.

### JOE IS INTRODUCED TO MRS. PEPPER.

JOE'S friends, the Astons, had by no means lost track of him. Mr. Aston regarded him as a sort of *protégé* of his; and during his course at Annapolis he had written him a number of warm letters. Singularly enough, Joe had not seen any member of the family since his first and only visit to Portland. Most of the time Katie had been away at school or abroad with her mother, and Mr. Aston, as he expressed it, had led a Bedouin life. Whenever the Constellation, on her practice cruises, had touched at Portland, Joe had gone round to Mr. Aston's house, only to find the inmates gone and the house closed for the season. But he had kept up a pretty regular correspondence with his friends, the time devoted to it being generally a theft from his well-earned periods of recreation. Katie had just graduated, as well as Joe. She was just as much delighted over the fact that she was no longer a schoolgirl as was he that he was no longer an Annapolis cadet.

Katie's school education now being completed, the Astons' hospitable mansion was once more

thrown open, and the family life resumed. Knowing that Joe would be granted a short leave of absence, and feeling that it would be pleasant to renew the former friendship, just previous to the closing exercises at the Academy, Mr. Aston sent him a cordial invitation to stop over on his way home, and spend a few days with them in Portland.

Joe started on his journey East in a state of great indecision. For a long time he debated with himself whether it would not be better to defer his promised visit until on his return from his own home with orders to join some ship. Was it the fear that his orders, when they came, might oblige him to report without delay, or the old-time diffidence, which, notwithstanding his brave demeanor, still clung to him, that occasioned this vacillation? Whichever it might be, after much backing and filling, just before the arrival of the train at Boston, Joe's decision was reached. He would stop off at Portland.

Having a few hours to himself in Boston, he spent them in getting a new outfit. He was about to embark upon a new life, and so far as his military equipment was concerned, he desired to take a brand-new start. A sword was the first thing he bought; and it was the best one he could find in the city. As he saw it doubled up and almost tied into a knot, he felt assured that it



would not break even if he should ever have occasion to use it in battle.

Joe was not anticipating war. But war is what swords are made for, he reasoned, so why not select as good an one as he would have done had the country been under arms? A fashionable tailor assured him that, so far as uniform was concerned, he could give him a perfect military setting off. He claimed to have done so by hundreds of Army and Navy officers, and it would be simply impossible for him to fail in his case. Gold fowl anchors for his Service coat, the daintiest threads of gold lace, with gold stars, to be worn on the sleeves of his full dress coat, shoulder knots to decorate the shoulders of the same, any number of brass buttons, a cap, and, last of all, a binocular glass and a sextant completed his purchases at the shops and stores.

Arriving at Portland, Joe was in no particular haste to leave the train. In fact, he was so dilatory that he was the last passenger to get out of the car. How delighted he would have been could another half-hour have been added to the journey. How easy it would then be, he thought, to collect himself, and prepare for his ordeal. But who has a better right to be bashful than a cadet, especially when, as in Joe's case, he cannot help it? In many respects it is his constitutional privilege; nor can the Government, which can

order him to be brave, with all its might of authority, order him likewise not to be bashful. Diffidence, however, is so seldom encountered in those just graduated from civil and military institutions, that we shall be obliged to pardon Joe for not rushing into Mr. Aston's arms, when finally he descried that gentleman waiting for him on the platform. Joe had telegraphed from Boston that he was *en route* — a piece of presumption he never would have been guilty of, had not Mr. Aston, as it were, commanded it.

Joe caught sight of Mr. Aston first. There he stood, scanning the passengers as if he feared our hero had grown out of his remembrance, and might pass unobserved. As it was he was taken by surprise. Joe stood beside him a full quarter of a minute, Mr. Aston having meanwhile turned to shake hands with a friend, before he was recognized. Then Mr. Aston seemed a little in doubt as to whether it were really Joe, after all. But presently, being convinced that it was the young man of whom he was in search, Joe found his hand in the most vise-like grip it had encountered for years.

"I was afraid," he began, in the same old cheery voice; "that you were going to give us the slip, after all. Why," he continued, "how you've grown!" And he gave Joe a smart turn round. "Tar all gone, too, and gait as steady as a canal

boat. Well, well! there's nothing like putting a boy on the outside of himself. I like you Annapolis fellows and West Pointers when you're not spoiled, and I guess you're not."

Joe tried to get a word in edgewise as they came out of the depot in sight of the hack stand. But here, while he was endeavoring to insert the smallest wedge of a remark, Mr. Aston fairly startled him by calling out, "John, John, don't let that fellow take your hub off."

Joe glanced in the direction of Mr. Aston's coachman, and saw that humble official doing his utmost to get out of the way of a heavy wagon that was coming down upon him at a lively pace. The horses attached to it were badly frightened, and their driver had well-nigh lost control of them. Presently, in spite of John's skilful manœuvres, the vehicles crashed into each other, greatly to the disfigurement of Mr. Aston's handsome carriage.

"No fault of yours, John; no fault of yours," Mr. Aston said kindly, stooping to examine the abraided wheels.

John, who, before entering Mr. Aston's service, had not been used to such consideration, touched his hat, and Joe saw an expression of deep gratitude in his eyes. "Wonder if I'll get out of my first scrape on board ship as easily as that," he said to himself. And then he reflected that it

would depend very much on the nature of the scrape, as well as upon that of the captain.

Mr. Aston's cordial greeting and the accident to the carriage served Joe an excellent turn. By the time he was fairly seated his embarrassment had well-nigh left him. On the drive from the depot Mr. Aston kept up a running fire of questions, most of which he himself answered, greatly to his young guest's amusement. It was not long before Joe caught sight of the old owls, and just beyond, the mansion hove in view. His next discovery was Mrs. Aston and Katie sitting out on the veranda. Joe had a good look at them before they saw him. A glance showed him that Mrs. Aston had changed but little. She was the same quiet, dignified lady he used to know. But Katie — what should he say of her! The bright, pretty schoolgirl of former years was hardly recognizable in the young lady now before him.

Joe blushed crimson as he alighted from the carriage, and Mrs. Aston and Katie came forward to greet him. But the warm welcome they extended put him quite at his ease.

"It's a very long time since we last saw you," said Mrs. Aston. "How you have changed. I never should have suspected it."

"Oh! I don't think he has changed so very much, mamma," said Katie, regarding Joe's fine physique with a quick glance. "Only he isn't a boy any longer."

Joe thought from the mischievous look which she gave him that she was inclined to rally him a little on his old-time awkwardness, but a glance from Mrs. Aston deterred her.

While Mrs. Aston and Katie commented on the changes which the last few years had wrought in all of them, Joe took occasion to further note some of the changes which Katie had undergone. As already intimated, she had grown to be a remarkably pretty girl. The expression of her face was very sweet. She was of medium height, of rather slight figure, and was possessed of that charm of manner which is the outcome of good breeding and education. She was evidently no hot-house plant, but a girl of the air and the sunshine, browned and hardened by frequent sojourns in the mountains and at the seashore. The same old look of mischief that used to shoot terror through Joe's soul still sparkled in her bright eyes.

Most of the talking was done by Mrs. Aston and Katie. The hard work of winning a commission in the Navy had left Joe little time for the enjoyment of ladies' society. His taciturnity, therefore, on this occasion, is not to be wondered at. But little by little they drew him out. It was not long before he gave them some fresh and lively details of his life at Annapolis. In fact, his sudden verbal facility surprised him so much that he feared he was monopolizing the conversation.

"O, Mr. Bently!" said Katie, springing impulsively from her chair, "are you fond of riding?"

Joe acknowledged that he was, but secretly wished that Katie would not address him as Mr. Bently.

"Papa," she went on, "has just bought me such a lovely horse. Let's go out and see him!" And she led Joe a brisk chase over the gravelled driveway to the stable. "John, John," she called, "bring out Forrest."

A beautiful young horse was led out for Joe's inspection.

"Wasn't it kind in papa," she went on, "to make me such a present?"

To this Joe likewise assented.

"I haven't tried him yet," she continued. "He's only been here two days. I was going to send round after Ned Brentford to go out with me to-morrow, but it won't be necessary now."

"Who is Ned Brentford?" Joe said to himself.

"We'll give him a run to Gorham. There's a good road out there. Don't you think Forrest is a pretty name, Mr. Bently? Oh! he's perfectly kind," she went on, as Joe ventured to suggest that she had better be a little more careful in going around him. "See how fond he is of me already."

Joe easily comprehended how this could be. The horse rubbed her arm caressingly with his

nose, and presently began rubbing very hard. "No, no, sir, I haven't any sugar. I always give him sugar, you know," she added, laughing, as Joe put out his hand to prevent her being pushed over. "John, can't you get me a lump?"

So John brought sugar from the stable where it was daily served out as a kind of ration to the horse, and Forrest was pacified. Meanwhile Joe had caught somewhat of Katie's enthusiasm, and he praised Mr. Aston's gift with all the fine epithets usually applied to such noble specimens as Forrest.

"You see," pursued Katie, "between him and the Celeste I am anticipating a pretty good time this summer. This is the Celeste's first season, you know, as well as Forrest's and mine."

Joe ventured to ask who or what the Celeste was.

"Why, haven't you heard of the Celeste? An account of her has been in all the papers. She's papa's new yacht. She's a perfect beauty, isn't she, Forrest?" Katie fell to caressing the horse again. "John," she concluded, as they left the stable, "see that Topham is all ready for Mr. Bently in the morning. We're going to try Forrest."

Katie still continued to address him as Mr. Bently. To Joe's ear this formality had an altogether unnatural sound. In her occasional letters

she had always called him Joe, and he saw no reason why she should not do so now. At last, with some hesitation, he asked her if she would not as lief call him Joe as she always had done, and, he added, "Won't you permit me to call you Katie?"

Katie was not a little amused at his red face and earnest manner. "I shall be glad to have you do so," she said, graciously; "but I thought naval cadets were so dignified, you know."

However, she immediately addressed him as Joe, at which they both laughed heartily. Joe at once returned the compliment, awkwardly enough it seemed to him. But he felt, as the conversation went on with less constraint, on his part at least, that the ice was broken, and they were again the boy and girl.

Meanwhile they continued to walk about the grounds. Katie gave him a description of everything they saw, from the noble old trees, many of which had stood there since Colonial times, to the owls on the gateway, soon to be illuminated with the electric light. Finally they reached the veranda. As Katie left him to prepare for dinner, he thought her by far the most delightful little companion he had ever known.

When Joe came down to dinner he found the family waiting for him out on the veranda. There was a lady present whom he had not previously



seen — a Mrs. Pepper from Providence ; and he was at once introduced. Ungenerous or unjust sentiments were wont to receive no indulgence in his breast ; but something about this woman made him think that in her case the right name and nature had combined. It struck him that a very little of her would go a long way.

It fell to his lot to be her escort to the dining hall, and to entertain her at dinner ; by no means an agreeable task. She was very curious to know all about the Navy, and plied Joe with every sort of question. She asked him if the officers did not all drink and gamble ; and remarked that she had heard strange stories even about the chaplains. The most singular thing about her was, that when he attempted to set matters right she would not listen to him, but would keep right on asking questions more absurd than ever. Finally she said, "What do naval officers have to do, anyway ? I never could see that they have a thing to do."

Without trying to enlighten her this time, Joe thought if she had phrased it, "What do not naval officers have to do," she would have hit about the truth of it.

"Do," said Mr. Aston, "it's a very hard life ; full of sacrifices and dangers, as well as endless fussiness and work. I should not care to have a boy of mine enter the Navy."

"Why, papa ?" asked Katie.

"Because in time of peace there's no career for a naval officer; to say nothing of the hardships he has to undergo."

"No career!" exclaimed Katie. "You forget that they all get promoted to be admirals and commodores. They wear such handsome uniforms, too; and command squadrons and ships. I'm sure I hope Joe won't think of leaving the Navy."

Everybody laughed at Katie's queer compendium of a naval officer's preferments.

"There it is," said Mr. Aston. "It's brass buttons, after all. Brass goes for a good deal more than gold in this country. But, Katie dear, you're a little mixed on the order of promotion and the precedence of command. It's a commodore and an admiral, a ship and a squadron."

"Oh! well," laughed Katie, "I got it all in. I never could understand it."

"As for leaving the Navy," remarked Joe, "I'm hardly in it yet. I have to serve two years afloat before I can get my first commission; if I do not fail even then. Besides, I owe the Government a good deal for my education."

"That's high moral ground," said Mr. Aston. "You might wait until you get your commission. Then, if there should ever happen to be a war, which is altogether unlikely, you could go back again."

"Yes; I hope you will leave the Navy and study law. It's no place for a young man," interjected Mrs. Pepper.

Mrs. Aston and Katie protested against any such idea. They did not see how a young man could aspire to anything higher than a commission in the Army or Navy. And, furthermore, they thought it altogether too bad for Mr. Aston and Mrs. Pepper to throw cold water on such a laudable ambition.

Joe felt very grateful for their warm defense of a naval career, while Mr. Aston exploded with merriment over their sharp arraignment of him. Joe could see that, although Katie was the apple of her father's eye, he delighted in teasing her. He also detected that a good deal of Mr. Aston's opposition to the Navy was simulated.

"What has become of that dear old sailor you used to write about, Mr. Bently—Joe, I mean?" suddenly propounded Katie.

"Oh! you mean old Dicky Dawson."

"Yes, Dicky Dawson. Do you think you will ever see him again?"

"I expect, sometime, to be shipmate with him again. The Navy is a small place, you know. I may find him on my first ship."

"That would be splendid. But where did you last hear from him?"

"In the hospital at *Ville Franche*, all battered up."

"Another case of saloon frescoing?" observed Mr. Aston, smiling at Katie's interest in the old sailor.

"Papa, you mustn't talk so about Dicky Dawson. Didn't he save Joe from the bashi-bazouks? I wish we could have him on the *Celeste*. Old sailors are so quaint and full of yarns."

"Yes, and of something else, too," laughed Mr. Aston, bent on teasing Katie.

"Papa, I think you're too bad. You haven't said a nice thing about the Navy," pouted Katie. "If you don't like it, what made you encourage Joe to go to the Academy?"

"I beg a thousand pardons," said Mr. Aston, with mock humility, "I hope I've given no offense."

A sly twinkle in his eye led Joe to believe that Mr. Aston was trying to make it easy for Mrs. Pepper, toward whom Mrs. Aston and Katie had developed a very strong opposition. This lady was a distant relative of Mr. Aston's, and it began to look to Joe as if her visits were regarded, by the feminine portion of the family at least, as in the nature of an adversity. But Mrs. Pepper seemed to improve a little as the dinner progressed. Her opinions, Joe discovered, were apt to vary with her impulses. He saw that she was inclined to be affable or acidulous, according as people agreed with or opposed her. He

thought she dwelt a little too long on Roger Williams, What Cheer, and other things peculiar to Providence; but Joe was rather fond of the local history of that city himself. Yet he was forced to admit to himself that in not a few ways Mrs. Pepper was the strangest lady he had ever met.

Finally, as they left the table, Katie exclaimed, "Papa, please don't use Topham to-morrow! Joe and I are going to give Forrest a run. Don't say, No," thinking she discovered a negative expression on her father's face.

Mr. Aston did not say No. He seldom did to Katie. But looking askance at Joe, Mrs. Pepper remarked, "Why, Franklin, I shouldn't think you would permit a young girl like Katie to be the first to ride a strange horse."

"I don't think there is any occasion for alarm," returned Mr. Aston very pleasantly. "John will go as groom, and if Forrest should cut up, Mr. Bently can shift saddles. Topham is as steady as a centre-board yacht. I think I can trust her," he concluded, looking fondly at Katie.

As Mrs. Pepper has somewhat to do with the happiness of two of the young people at least, of this story, a word further concerning her may not be out of place. She is a lady of some means. Her home is in the shadow of Brown University, in Providence. She has nothing to do in the world but seek her own happiness, and minister

to the happiness of people around her. From what has already been said of her it would seem, if the happiness of people around her is her chief aim in life, that desire and tact in her case are wholly at variance.

She is very much attached to the Astons, and pays them long visits whenever she takes it into her head to do so. She is interested in all their affairs, speaks her mind freely to them on all sorts of subjects—in short, makes herself one of the family. She prides herself on the keenness of her perceptive faculties, and thinks herself unusually sharp and clever.

Having heard a great deal first and last about Joe Bently, through him chiefly her attention had been called to naval subjects. For some time Mrs. Pepper had cherished a certain notion, and the moment her eyes fell upon this handsome, manly cadet, it suddenly became a positive and alarming conviction. But we will allow her to speak for herself at all proper times and places; or find some spokesman for her, who, we trust, will do her no great injustice. It would have been a pleasure not to have introduced Mrs. Pepper to the reader; but then Joe's story could have been only half told without it, and that would have made it too much like a biography.

How could Joe long remember Mrs. Pepper's caustic remarks and sour looks in the society of

such a girl as Katie Aston? And notwithstanding that lady gave him a most unfriendly look as he and Katie rode away next morning, it was instantly forgotten. To tell the truth, she had had quite a depressing effect upon Joe. But once upon the road his old buoyancy of spirits returned.

How fresh and sweet his young companion looked under the touch of the crisp, cool breeze coming out of the northwest! How really beautiful she seemed in the glorious sunshine!

Joe was quite as much at home in the saddle as in a ship's top. They had gone but a little distance before he became impatient to "crack on," as sailors say, to see how much speed Topham could carry, but regard for Katie's safety with her new horse restrained him. A word of caution to his young mistress from John, who was following pretty closely, also had due weight with him. Katie, on her part, knew very well what was in his mind; but she had no intention of keeping Forrest down. They had hardly left the city before they came to a long even stretch of wood. Forrest seemed to sniff in from the very air his young mistress' purpose. His whole frame quivered beneath the first gentle indications that his speed was to be tested.

At a point fixed in her own mind, to Joe's surprise and the groom's consternation, she fearlessly gave rein to the excited horse. He was off like

the wind, but as true and even in his movement as a bird. Topham sprang forward to the contest. For a moment it was neck and neck between the two horses, then Joe was gradually distanced, till far in advance, the clever little horsewoman drew up at an improvised reaching post, and turned, laughing at her escort's discomfiture. Presently John came tearing down upon them, looking quite frightened. "Ye oughtn't to do so, Miss; indeed ye oughtn't!" he exclaimed. "I had strict orders not to let you do so."

"Who gave you such orders?" asked Katie.

"Yer Aunt Pepper, Miss." (Katie always addressed Mrs. Pepper as Aunt or Auntie, although the relationship was distant and vague.)

"Oh!" laughed Katie. "But why don't you admire Forrest?" she went on. "Didn't he do nobly?" And she leaned forward and patted the horse's handsome neck in gentlest approval.

Joe's thoughts were not upon the beautiful animal Katie rode, but upon the gentle rider. If, just then, he had appraised her as the most beautiful girl the sun ever shone upon, it would have been no wonder. Her rich brown hair had been daintily gathered about her pretty forehead, into what her young lady friends called "the sweetest little puffs in the world"; her eyes sparkled with excitement, and her cheeks glowed with the bright color and perfect health of youth. As she



sat her horse, the embodiment of maidenly dignity and grace, Joe thought he had never before seen such a picture.

It must be confessed that his admiration was of an æsthetic, rather than a sentimental nature. And how strange it was that in nearly all his mental processes everything should be referred to a ship! Even now, as he looked at Katie, the vision of a ship came into his mind. He had read on the train that the most harmonious thing in nature is a ship under full sail, and he was now debating with himself whether a beautiful girl on a beautiful horse be not a more harmonious adjustment of things. It need hardly be said that the result was in Katie's favor.

Quite an important feature in Joe's visit was his meeting with Ned Brentford, the young gentleman whose place he had taken on the ride. Young Brentford called several times during Joe's stay. Mr. Aston introduced him as "The scion of an old Portland family." He was very fond of referring to Ned in this manner; for there were certain aristocratic notions he was known to cherish respecting his ancestry. Brentford was Joe's senior by two years. He was a very agreeable, fine-appearing young fellow, and a great favorite with the Astons. Even Mrs. Pepper, who had tried by every possible means to make Joe uncomfortable, bestowed only smiles and flattery upon

Ned. Had Joe been less high-minded, he might have cherished only envy toward this young man who filled such a large place in the good graces of his friends. But instead, his own esteem and friendship were freely given him, and by the time he was ready to take his leave Joe and Brentford had become fast friends.

The end of Joe's visit came all too quickly. Ned and Katie accompanied him to the depot. As he bade them farewell, Katie playfully remarked, "Don't let me see you again, sir, until you have distinguished yourself." Then, stepping forward with him to the car platform, she added, "I hope you won't be discouraged by what papa and Aunt Pepper said about the Navy. I'm sure papa was only in jest," and with another good-by the train was off.

## CHAPTER III.

### HE RECEIVES ORDERS.

IN one respect Joe had been disappointed with his visit. He could not understand why Mr. Aston should be so opposed to his remaining in the Navy. But this is easily explained. Quite recently Mr. Aston had become a member in a large ship-building company, consequently it had occurred to him that a fine field in naval architecture might be opened to Joe in their service. Joe's course at Annapolis, he thought, would be an admirable equipment for beginning such work; and in a few years he might thus become invaluable to the company. They were hopeful of securing contracts from the Government for building cruisers, and in this department Joe's talents and knowledge would find large scope. The salary, of course, would be much larger than he would receive in the Navy for years.

But it was not so much Joe's interest as that of the company, Mr. Aston was looking at; he regarded Joe's prospects as good enough. When, however, the matter was broached to Mrs. Aston

and Katie, they unitedly and peremptorily opposed it.

"Papa," Katie said, "wants Joe to be nothing but a common shipbuilder." "His whole soul is wrapped up in the Navy," Mrs. Aston remarked, "and it would be cruel to tempt him out of it." And that was the end of Mr. Aston's scheme.

A perfect ovation awaited Joe at his own home. He was lionized by the young people of his own age, and the small boys spent sleepless nights in thinking about what he told them of a man-of-war. He was greatly amused at the prevailing ideas of the Navy. "Where is the Navy now?" was a question of hourly recurrence. One old man asked him when he expected to be general; another, if he would not have to wait several years before he could become an admiral. Scarcely had he reached his father's house before a neighbor, who was present at the family jubilee, stepped forward and asked, "How much be you a gettin' now, Joe?" Poor Joe was fairly confounded, however, when a good old lady inquired if they had any baptisms and class-meetings in the Navy.

One morning, as he was about to start on a grand hunting and fishing expedition, gotten up in his honor, a great formidable appearing document was put in Joe's hand. Hastily breaking the seal, he read:

BUREAU OF NAVIGATION, NAVY DEPARTMENT,  
WASHINGTON, D. C., June 25th, 18—.

SIR :

Proceed to Newport, R. I., without delay, and report to Commander W. N. Farradale for duty on board the United States Steamer Daybreak.

Respectfully,

\_\_\_\_\_,  
Chief of Bureau.

NAVAL CADET JOE BENTLY, U. S. N.,

\_\_\_\_\_  
AROOSTOOK CO., MAINE.

Forty-eight hours after the receipt of this dignified missive, Joe was repeating the journey so eventful in other years, on his way to join his new ship.

During the twenty minutes of waiting at the depot in Portland, his thoughts were with his friends, the Astons. He would have liked to take a run across the city to pay them a brief call. He wondered, were he able to do so, whether he would again encounter Mrs. Pepper. Somehow, this woman had been very obnoxious to Joe. The impressions she had left upon him had grown into strange distinctness. The frown she gave him on the morning of his ride with Katie, the little biting sarcasms of her speech, her evident pleasure on his departure, he could not forget. It all came to mind now with much more completeness

of detail than the pleasant things of his visit, as disagreeable things are apt to do. Joe liked to be well thought of, and Mrs. Pepper's evident hostility to him gave him no little concern.

His eyes meanwhile kept wandering to the spot where Katie had stood the week before when she bade him farewell. It had a strange fascination for him. He began recalling the incidents of his visit with which Katie was more particularly connected. It was a most pleasant mental exercise. It was almost like passing through them again. How glad he was that he was permitted to regard such a sweet, beautiful girl as Katie Aston, as his friend! And as the train resumed its journey, and the city dropped from view, his heart was full of warm, chivalrous impulses toward his friends; but he did not realize how fast one of the little family group was becoming its bright particular star.

At Boston, he found a fine new uniform waiting him, and next morning, in prompt obedience to his orders, he stood upon the wharf at Newport, waiting for the nine o'clock boat, in which he was to take passage to the ship. Harry and Swem, who had not been forgotten by the commandant of cadets, were with him. How resplendent they looked in their handsome uniforms, their bright new swords dangling at the proper angle from their sides. They might be pardoned for feeling

a little "set up" over their fine appearance. This momentary flush of self-consciousness, however, was doubtless caused by the admiring glances of a group of very young ladies, who stood upon another part of the wharf waiting to go on board the little steamer *Eolus* for a trip across the bay. Presently the boat hove in view, rounding the lower end of Goat Island, and in a few moments the cadets, under the smart strokes of the well-trained crew, were placed alongside the ship.

A fine little craft was the United States ship *Daybreak*. She was a third-rate steamer, deviating from vessels of her class in the Navy, by belonging to a more modern type. She was the handsomest ship of the Navy. With her yellow masts, inclined smoke-stack, and black, freshly-painted hull, she had a decidedly rakish appearance. "Saucy enough for a yacht," the sailors used to say, "but light material for a man-of-war."

The *Daybreak* was bark-rigged, had quite powerful engines, made commendable speed under steam or sail, and would be, in time of war, a valuable auxiliary to still more modern and formidable ships. She had been in commission about a year, and, excepting a short cruise in the interest of American fishermen, had never been out of United States waters. She was now lying temporarily at Newport, waiting orders from the flagship of the North Atlantic Squadron.

It must be confessed that the cadets mounted the gangway rather tremulously, and the rattling of their swords as they stepped over the side, was quite startling to them. The ordeal through which a cadet passes on presenting himself for his first duty after graduation, if not fiery, is exceedingly trying. Life on board ship is not altogether new to him, for he has learned something of it on his practice cruises; but he has entered a new realm of duty and responsibility. So he is, of course, anxious to acquit himself worthily in his new sphere, and it is with no little dread that he reports to the one whose judgment is to largely determine the measure of his success. Therefore it is not to be wondered at that Joe and his comrades felt no little trepidation as they stepped for the first time upon the Daybreak's deck, to formally present themselves for their new duty.

Commander, or Captain Farradale—the title by which he was addressed—was a man combining in himself rare qualities of mind and heart. As a commanding officer, he had attained great popularity in the Navy. There was not an officer or man on board the Daybreak who did not regard himself as extremely fortunate in being under his command. He was never brusque, never out of humor, yet everybody was on the alert to carry out his orders and wishes. If circumstances required it he could be severe, but circumstances



seldom required it on board the Daybreak. He knew how to get the best things out of officers and men without resorting to antique naval methods. His theory was, that an unhappy ship, an insubordinate and indolent crew, were a reproach to the commanding officer; and a cleaner, trimmer ship than his, a better drilled crew, or a more contented ship's company, could not be found in any navy.

The moment the cadets stepped over the cabin threshold, they recognized at a glance the captain's character. Joe, being spokesman, introduced the trio, and explained that they had all been ordered to the Daybreak, and had come to report to him. The captain gave them a cordial greeting, and after endorsing their orders, told them that he very much hoped they would like the ship. He said that so far as he was able to judge, the Daybreak was a happy ship; and he was glad to say that everybody seemed to make his duties more a matter of pleasure and pride, rather than a task and a bugbear. Taking them slightly into his confidence, he remarked that they would no doubt be pleased with the cruise, as he had received intimations the day before that it would be very desirable. Then he politely dismissed them, saying that there would be no duty for them that day, and they could spend it in getting settled in their new quarters.

"He's a trump!" exclaimed Harry as they reached the quarter deck, in a tone sufficiently loud to be heard by an old quartermaster on the poop, who chuckled an inaudible response.

The cadets' quarters were already occupied by an ensign, a cadet of the graduating class of the year before, an assistant engineer, an assistant surgeon, a second lieutenant of marines, and a pay-master's clerk. These officers constituted the steerage mess. Each member of the mess happened to be present to receive the cadets as they filed down the starboard 'steerage ladder. The ensign, the senior in rank, acted as host of the occasion. Giving each cadet a hearty welcome, he introduced the other members of the mess, who did likewise. In his impulsive way Harry whispered to Joe, "I call this an A 1 reception."

Joe quickly ran over to himself the names that had been given him. He rather prided himself on his ability to remember names. He discovered that, oddly enough, they fell into alliterative couplets. The ensign and the cadet paired as Arlington and Austy; the assistant surgeon and second lieutenant of marines, as Cardington and Coverly; while the assistant engineer and the pay clerk rejoiced in the cognomens of Henlington and Hubbins.

The formalities were of short duration, and the

cadets began the business of getting settled. The steerage proper was divided into two compartments, one on the starboard and the other on the port side. The space between, a portion of the berth deck, went by the name of steerage country. The common mess-table was in the starboard steerage. With this exception, however, the mess was divided between the two sides of the ship, the ensign and cadets having their quarters on the starboard, and all the others on the port side. Both steerages were very small; so minified, indeed, that the table, when drawn out to its fullest length, came squarely against the lockers at one end, and the bulk-head at the other. Whenever they might desire to be seated at table, as a whole, they could only do so by solidly wedging themselves together, suggesting to Joe a table of a country hotel during a convention.

The introductions were barely over when Schopy's sad eye detected at a glance the untold miseries awaiting him in such contracted quarters.

"I didn't know," he remarked with a very lugubrious accent, "that I was going to be ordered to a cattle car."

"Oh! you'll get used to it," said the young marine officer, laughing at Swem's crest-fallen aspect. "You'll shrink to it, like the rest of us."

"It's one of the sweat-boxes of the old Navy," added Hubbins, the pay clerk.

"You mustn't mind our old Schopy," said Harry. "He's in the Navy anyway under compulsion, and gets a little morbid over it."

"It will either kill or cure him," said Hubbins.

"Didn't you say his name was Swem?" asked Arlington, the ensign, aside, of Joe.

"Oh! Schopenhauer is only a nickname," laughed Joe. "You see, he looks on the dark side of everything, and that's how it got fastened on to him."

"Wasn't Schopenhauer the great German pessimist?" inquired Arlington, the name having awakened a new train of thought in his mind.

"I think I've read that he was," modestly returned Joe.

"We're sailors, not cow-boys, Schopy," said Harry, calling Arlington's and Joe's attention back to the subject under discussion. "We can't expect all creation inside a man-of-war."

"The quarters are a little snug, that's a fact," observed Arlington. "But you'll soon get accustomed to them. By the way, I presume you would like to get your traps stowed when you're ready; those two lockers, to port there, belong to you. You'll have to sling your hammocks in the steerage country — unless one of you would prefer to sleep in here on the table."

Everybody but the cadets looked amused at this suggestion.

"You'd better speak for the table, Mr. Swem," said Coverly, with a knowing look. "I use the table on the other side for that purpose, and it works like a charm."

"I don't see why it should be so very funny, sleeping on a table," observed Swem, who saw that there was something behind Coverly's remark. "I detest a hammock, so I'll take the table."

"It's a little awkward, having only one wash-basin and looking-glass," resumed Arlington. "We have to wait a little, mornings, like hanging round a ticket office ; but it does very well."

"Yes, lovely," interrupted the young marine officer.

"We flatter ourselves that we have a well-regulated mess," continued the ensign. "We find it rather annoying to have so many things in common. It keeps us treading on one another's toes ; and of course we have our little jars and an occasional set-to, but that's a mere bagatelle."

"A mere bagatelle," drawled Coverly, looking straight at the assistant engineer and the pay-clerk, who colored perceptibly.

This was followed all round by considerable badinage and raillery. The day before, Hubbins and Henlington had had high words over the lavatory, followed by a genuine steerage racket. The whole mess, including several wardroom officers,

had been present as spectators. Any allusion to this episode was painful in the extreme to the combatants, as their wounds, neither of body nor spirit, had yet healed.

While the chaffing was going on, Joe bestowed his first thoughtful attention upon his own mess-mates. On the whole, he was rather pleased with them. He was very favorably impressed with Arlington, the ensign, who had so pleasantly expatiated on the general scantiness of the steerage quarters and the mess-traps. He seemed so full of good nature, and so inclined to apologize for everything, that Joe queried a little whether he could be ingenuous in it all. But a glance at Arlington's face assured him that he was the soul of sincerity and frankness. He was caterer of the mess, and nothing could exceed his interest and helpfulness in getting the new-comers established. Austy, the cadet, was very quiet, and had an absorbed, abstracted look. It appeared to Joe as if he were all the time wrestling with some difficult problem in physics. His large head and slight physique, with the gold-bowed glasses perched upon his nose, and his look of engrossment, marked him in Joe's mind as very much of a student. A sheet of paper with instruments alongside, indicated the immediate cause of his preoccupation.

"What is it this time, Austy?" inquired Cov-

erly, "a gun-carriage, a car-coupler, or a boot-buttoner?"

Austy answered with a smile.

"You see," continued Coverly, "he thinks he's a Watts or a Robert Fulton. He'll astonish the world, some day, with his inventions. It's mess-school time, anyway. Little Pills, where are your Therapeutics?"

The assistant surgeon flushed up a little at being thus addressed before the cadets, but he kept quiet. He was very young for the position he had attained, but it had been won by exceptional devotion to his studies. He was now working night and day for his second examination, at which time he was ambitious of making several numbers for himself. Joe was much pleased with his quiet, thoughtful aspect, and his polished address and manners. Presently this youthful doctor was called to the sick bay.

"I'd like to show you something on the other side," said Coverly, motioning the cadets to accompany him to the port steerage. "We have a few mess curios over there. Hubbins is our antique," he added, glancing slyly at the pay clerk.

Hubbins' retort, not a mild one, was lost on Coverly, who by this time stood in the doorway of the opposite steerage. For the first time, Joe took special notice of Hubbins. He saw that he was a long way past middle life. His hair was

nearly all gone, the few remaining spears being about as thick as sprouting oats, and under the uncompromising use of the brush, they had been trained to stand up as straight as young corn. Hubbins had been in the Navy so long that the present admiral of the North Atlantic Squadron had been with him as a midshipman on his first cruise.

"That's what a man gets, having to live with boys all his life," growled Hubbins. "I might have been an admiral by this time, if I hadn't been a fool."

Before Joe could learn what the precise act of stultification was that had deprived Hubbins of a commission in the highest grade of the Navy, Coverly was all ready to exhibit the mess curios. "Boy," he sung out to the colored servant, "open that drawer."

"De doctor tell me nebber to 'low no one to see in dat drawer, sir," replied the darky, with a frightened look.

"He never told me that. Give me the key."

The boy unwillingly surrendered the key which the doctor had entrusted to him.

"Oh! I see," laughed Harry. "It's a skeleton."

"Yes, a skeleton," said Hubbins. "There's altogether too much Egyptian feast business in this mess. Just look in that drawer, there."



Joe did as he was told. He saw not only a skeleton, but some half-dozen skulls.

"I don't think the doctor will thank us for this, Coverly," remarked Austy.

"Thank us," said the young assistant engineer, whose dreams were often disturbed by frightful visions of the anatomical cabinet, "he knows if we should report him, his beautiful collection would soon be dumped on the beach."

"You see," mildly explained Arlington, "the doctor is very fond of comparative anatomy, and is collecting specimens. The skeleton is that of an Aztec of the time of Cortez, and the skulls are from Labrador, the South Sea Islands and Australia."

"They're Digger Injins, skeletons and all," said Hubbins.

"Why doesn't he keep them in the sick bay?" inquired Joe.

"It wouldn't be cheerful for the men to have them knocking round there," rejoined Hubbins.

"The trouble is," observed Coverly, "the doctor has them spread out about twice a week under a lantern, after the steerage lights are out, and Hubbins can't turn in his hammock without being grinned at. Somebody tucked one under his arm while he was asleep, the other night."

"Yes, somebody," said Hubbins, with emphasis. "What's your specialty, Mr. Bently?" he continued, turning abruptly to Joe.

"Oh! I haven't any," laughed Joe.

"Well, you'd better get one, if it's nothing better than picking tunes out of a zithern, like Coverly. A cadet without his specialty nowadays is like a young brave without his scalp. You'll never amount to anything in the Navy without a specialty."

"Hubbins thinks the cadets are all professors, nowadays," laughed Arlington.

"Professors of everything but their business — seamanship," retorted Hubbins.

"Oh! let up on the cadets, Hubbins," put in Austy, looking up from his tracing paper. "These new fellows will take you literally."

"Between Coverly and Hubbins," remarked Arlington in a low tone to Joe, "we have lots of fun. Hubbins is thoroughly kind-hearted; but it's too bad, as he says, that he has to live in the steerage with boys. You'll get to like him very much."

"I think I shall," replied Joe; "and Coverly and Henlington, too."

"The worst thing about Coverly," pursued Arlington, "is that he's always playing practical jokes on us. It was he who tucked the skull under Hubbins' arm. Henlington, by the way, is a fine messmate, but a little peculiar. He is a great experimenter. Why, the other day, just to learn how people feel when intoxicated, he drank a glass of whiskey for the first time in his life."

Joe looked incredulous.

"I can assure you that it was only experimental," resumed Arlington. "He was determined to know for himself, if there is anything in the sensation to excuse a man for getting drunk."

"Did he find out?"

"I should say he did. He didn't get out of his hammock for two days. He doesn't say much about it, but I notice he never touches whiskey, now."

"Doesn't Coverly run him a good deal about it?"

"He did, but it's got to be an old story. You will find Henlington a put-yourself-in-his-place kind of fellow, and very intelligent."

"The young gentlemen's traps is here, sir," said the coxswain of the second cutter, putting his head inside the door, and the work of unpacking began.

## CHAPTER IV.

### ASSIGNED TO HIS DIVISION.

IT did not take long for the cadets to dispose of their luggage. Men-of-wars-men have a larger bump of order than any other class of men in the world. Their facile aptitude in every sort of ship stowage, would excite the stevedore's envy. Joe was a most accommodating shipmate. He good-naturedly disposed of Swem's replete wardrobe in their single locker, leaving but little space for his own. He likewise relieved Harry's perplexity by stretching his drawer under the transom to its utmost capacity, thus providing for the excess of that young gentleman's outfit, which, through the affectionate agency of his sisters and an admiring cousin, assumed undue proportions. Order was soon restored to the little steerage, whose general appearance a few moments before, might well have suggested that the place had "been struck by lightning."

Out of the kindness of his heart, Joe decided to take Swem under his special wing. He realized that he was ill-adapted to the Service, and

foresaw that not a few disagreeable things were in store for him. Therefore he at once established a highly praiseworthy, but exceedingly inconvenient partnership.

By this time, also, Joe had pretty well made up his mind as to what his ship-life was likely to be. He was aware that in the familiar relations and intercourse of the steerage, he would be looked upon as only a boy, and be treated accordingly. Nevertheless, he was resolved to maintain his dignity as a young officer. For Joe's standard of what a cadet ought to be, was a high one; so he was determined, and without making any fuss about it either, to live up to it as well as he could.

No sooner was the last bit of toggerly stowed away—no doubt to its own happy satisfaction, could it have had its say—than Joe and Harry set out to explore the ship. For they were boys enough to be completely under the spell of a man-of-war. To them, a fine ship seemed a kind of sweetheart. One who was possessed of a touch of genuine pride and self consciousness. At least, the Daybreak appeared to know how to fill their minds with all sorts of pretty conceits about herself.

Thoroughly prepossessed with the Daybreak, the cadets began what might be termed a reconnaissance of the vessel. They had planned an intelligent survey, as they wished to get the ship, as

it were, under their hand—to be on easy terms with her from the beginning. Arlington had kindly volunteered to accompany them. A glance sufficed to show that everything was in apple-pie order. The berth deck, the point of their setting out, had an air of fastidious neatness. The mate of the berth deck seemed to have but one thought in mind—that the admiral might pounce down upon it some day when it was not ready for inspection. As they went on, Arlington informed them that Austy was mate of the berth deck, and that he was so fussy about it, that had it been endowed with ears and finger nails, he would have inspected them thrice daily. “The marines and berth-deck cooks call him ‘Old Mortality,’” he concluded with a laugh.

The armory, the engine and fire-rooms, the holds, the store-rooms, the magazine and shell-room passages seemed almost to obtrude additional testimony upon Joe and Harry as to the order and cleanliness that pervaded the Daybreak from keelson to main-truck.

“You see,” said Arlington as they reached the spar deck, “Captain Farradale insists that things can be kept ship-shape with half the ordinary work and trouble. Dirt and disorder he can’t and won’t stand. The men all know it, and a spot of tar on deck or a towel hanging out of a port makes a lively old skirmish among them.”

As regarded order and cleanliness, Joe and Harry thought they knew how a ship ought to be kept, for it had been dinned into them, yet they regarded the bright, well-kept decks of the Day-break with a feeling akin to wonder. Everything as by instinct seemed to know its proper place. Several gratings which, for some purpose or other, had been taken from their places over the engine-room hatch and stood up against the coaming, seemed to be having a fit of the sulks.

Once upon the spar deck, which Arlington informed them was the finest of any wooden ship afloat, Joe was lost to everything but the battery. Had he been disposed to answer Hubbins' ironical question, and expressed his preference for a specialty, it would undoubtedly have been ordnance. The guns with their carriages were nearly all new. Inferior, Arlington said, to those of other navies, but still the best in the United States Navy. They were highly interesting, as they indicated a public awakening to the urgent subject of national defense. While the guns were not of sufficient calibre to sink an enemy's ship, they would without question, he thought, send her home for repairs. By a process of daily friction under the sharp eyes of the division officers, these guns had acquired a brilliancy of polish that made all visiting gun-captains from other ships green with envy.

"What's the name of that old gun-captain?"

asked Harry. "He looks as if he'd like to run me through for daring to brush up against his gun."

"Oh! that's old Binder," laughed Arlington. "He's quite a character. A lady, who was visiting the ship the other day, couldn't keep her fingers off that gun, it was so bright. It was too much for old Binder. Stepping up to her, he gave a comical douse to his cap and asked if she wouldn't please keep her 'dirty paws offen that gun.' He didn't mean to be impertinent, but the captain clapped him in the brig for it."

The cadets spent some time in the close examination of a new Hotchkiss revolving cannon and a Gatling gun, just received from the Washington Navy Yard.

Arlington explained the mechanism of each one, and also said that in their way they were as delicate in their construction as a chronometer. The Gatling gun, he declared, was a perfect prodigy in the way it could reel off the shot. "This battery," continued the young man, with considerable pride, "and these small pieces, would be more effective in action in our day than anything afloat in the war, on either side."

An interesting conversation on ordnance ensued, which was presently interrupted by a sort of swooping down upon them of the executive officer. It was the first time Joe and Harry had seen him. They tried to find him upon leaving the cabin, but



soon abandoned the search, as the executive was burrowing among all sorts of ship chandlery down in the yeoman's store-room. This officer was a man of quite large stature, with clean-cut features, and an eye so keen as to be almost piercing. His expression was kindly, and his manner very brisk. There was an air about him which plainly told all delinquents that the only way to keep on the good side of him was by the strictest attention to duty.

His appearance was so much in the nature of an apparition that, before they had been introduced to him and drawn into an animated conversation, the cadets were uncertain as to what sort of an impression he had made upon them. They had indulged in no little conjecture as to what this new executive would be like. For they knew how much a ship's happiness depends upon her first lieutenant. While in a sense the captain of a man-of-war may be said to reign, in a certain other sense the executive officer may be said to rule. Therefore, to these young subalterns, Mr. Moncrief — for this was his name — was an object of much curiosity and solicitude.

Mr. Moncrief prided himself upon one of his strong points. No one could be in his presence long without having it brought pointedly to his attention. And this was his talent for getting more work out of men and officers than any other

executive in the Navy. He flattered himself that this was done not so much by his authority over them, either. Indeed, those who knew him best admitted that it was accomplished by genuine tact, and by the force of his own character and example. That there was any limit to a cadet's capacity for work, he scarcely seemed to recognize. This, to be sure, was a compliment to the cadet, but also an occasion for alarm as well, should he at any time permit his efforts to slacken.

Mr. Moncrief lost no time in giving the cadets a vision of their duties, and it could not be called a bird's-eye view, either. His remarks were but the prologue to the many acts and scenes which followed in the development of his supreme idea. As he delivered his mind of his expectations touching the cadets, he caught an expression of comical bewilderment depicted in their countenances. He himself seemed quite struck by the lavishness of his own exactions upon them, but could not forego concluding his observations with the old naval saw that "a cadet's duties are multitudinous, multifarious and never ceasing."

"Does he mean all that for us?" asked Harry, quite out of breath as Mr. Moncrief hurried away in answer to a message from the captain.

"Mean it?" replied Arlington, "you'll find out he means it. He's the hardest-working executive in the Navy. Why, there isn't a morning that he

doesn't spend half the watch on deck, and he's always the last to turn in. There's no let up to him."

"I'm not afraid of him," said Joe complacently. "But what did he mean by saying we must be ready for a good deal of extra duty?"

"I object to the phrase," remarked Harry. "Extra duty is a punishment on board ship."

"Of course he didn't mean to insinuate that we'd get extra duty in the sense that the men do," observed Joe.

"O, no!" said Arlington. "He only thinks that a naval officer can't know too much, and he'll keep you busy."

"Can't you give us some examples of what we'll have to do?" Joe asked.

"Well, for one thing, you'll probably have to survey this harbor, and every other one we go into, as for that matter. He thinks that every naval officer should know how to pilot any ship into any harbor, from Key West to Eastport. When I was with him as a midshipman,\* I had so much of this kind of work to do, that I ran a little hydrographic office on my own hook."

"Oh! I didn't know you had been with him before," said Joe.

"Yes, I know all about him. First of all, he took the greatest interest in my journal. One

\* The old name for navel cadet.

day he told me I was running short of material, and I'd better go ashore and learn all I could about the Brooklyn Bridge. After I had written up its history, he made me work out the tensile strength of the cables. When the ship happened to be near enough, he sent me to Chester to study up John Roach's establishment. Another time, I had to do the same thing by the South Boston Iron Works. I will show you the record of my visits."

"He surely didn't overlook the Torpedo Station?" queried Joe, glancing over the taffrail at Goat Island.

"O, no! that was the most important of all, excepting his hobby—handling ships in action under sail."

"He lives at the wrong time, then," said Harry. "What a splendid aid he would have made to Decatur or Perry! The fighting ship of the future won't have sails. She'll be a kind of huge raft like the Dandolo,\* for carrying big guns."

"Sails will never be abandoned, you may rest assured," said Joe. "A very slight accident would disable the most perfect machinery afloat."

"Yes," added Arlington, "bearings might get hot, a shell might explode in the engine-room, or the propellers be shot away. Then, where would your raft be? No, tacks and sheets will never

\* Italian man-of-war.

be displaced by coal-whips," he concluded, with emphasis.

"But how does Mr. Moncrief manage his hobby?" asked Joe.

"Oh! he has a special drill once a week. The ship is supposed to have an enemy's shot in her boilers, or her machinery to have broken down, and she has to fight under sail alone, or surrender. Then the sails are handled to suit every conceivable manœuvre. He has a war game too, which they play in the ward room evenings, for recreation. He'll have you in before long to try a hand at it," and he gave him an amused look.

"I don't like sham fighting," said Harry. "It's too much like learning to shoot with an air gun."

"Edgerton's spoiling for a war," laughed Joe.

"Well, I never could get up any enthusiasm over playing at war," urged Harry. "It's a circumlocution office. About all you learn is how not to do it."

"You can't get up a war just to learn how to fight, that's a sure case," remarked Arlington. "But just wait till the squadron drills come off; you'll forget whether you're at the bombardment of Fort Fisher, or the battle of Trafalgar."

"That will be splendid," put in Joe.

"If I had my way," continued Arlington, "I'd use up two or three of the old ships every summer in sham battles. First, I'd shell them; then I'd

let them taste a torpedo. If that didn't sink them, I'd try ramming."

"How about the killed and wounded?" laughed Harry.

"Oh! I wouldn't have anybody on board. I'd tow them out to sea as the Italian ships do, and clear for action. But it's hard to learn to fight without fighting. By the way, I liked Captain Farradale's idea, when I was with him as a midshipman in the Constellation."

"What did he do?" asked Joe, eager for information touching his new captain.

"Why, he used to get the ship into all sorts of scrapes, just to teach us how to handle her. One day, coming into Newport, he ran her nose into Goat Island. We worked nearly a week to get her off. Sometimes in tacking he would let her miss stays. Once he allowed her to be taken aback in a pretty stiff breeze, and several times we had to claw off a lee shore for dear life. I shall never forget one day at boat drill in Boston Harbor" —

"Good morning, Commodores! Fighting your battles over again, I see."

The cadets turned quickly, and saw a gentleman whom Arlington presently introduced as Lieutenant Bloomsbury. He stood regarding them with a highly amused aspect. He was fat and jolly, had a look of irrepressible, as well as

inexhaustible, good-nature. The heartiness with which he shook hands, and the ringing welcome he gave them, quite touched Joe and Harry. But he had just time to say a few words when, much to their disappointment, he was called away.

"He's the Mark Tapley of the ship," Arlington observed, when Mr. Bloomsbury was out of ear-shot. "Only, if anything, there's more fun in him. You'll like him best of all the watch-officers. Did you ever hear of the midshipman who pinned the two commodores together by their coat-tails?" continued Arlington, laughing heartily. "Well, he's the one that did it."

The cadets had heard the story, but it seemed doubly amusing now that they had seen the audacious perpetrator.

"Oh! I forgot all about the watch-officers," said Joe. "Who are they?" And he fell to musing how pleasant it would be should it fall to his lot to be in Mr. Bloomsbury's division, and to be gentleman of his watch.\*

Arlington explained that there were four of them; that in port they were in four watches, and at sea in five. "I am the fifth," he said, "as I stand a regular watch at sea."

"Do the cadets ever have the deck at sea?" Harry inquired.

\* The cadet on duty on the port side of the quarter deck is entitled, "Gentleman of the watch."

"In good weather Captain Farradale always turns it over to them. Of course with a regular watch-officer standing by to see that nothing goes wrong. But I want to tell you more about Mr. Bloomsbury."

Joe and Harry eagerly assented.

"Mr. Bloomsbury," Arlington went on, "does not agree with Mr. Moncrief in his idea of a fighting ship. He would dispense with sails altogether. You'd laugh to hear them discuss the relative merits of either kind of ship over the war-game. He thinks in an engagement, the masts would be the first thing to be shot away. This would be likely to kill half the people on deck, and silence the pivot guns by obstructing the carriages. Or it would make such a tangle that the ship would become unmanageable. You must get him to show you a ship he has modeled."

"What is it like?" Joe asked, much interested.

"It suits Mr. Edgerton's idea to a T. It is not much more than a raft. He has telescopic arrangements where the masts ought to be; so if anything should happen the engines, the tubes—that's what they are—could be run up like a smoke-stack, and be rigged as jury masts. There is great sport in the wardroom over the style of ship that ought to be built for the new Navy; a little War of the Roses, you know."

During the intervals of conversation, Joe was



getting everything pretty well in mind. He disliked details as much as Harry, but he well knew that it is only by the strictest attention to such, that success in any sphere can be won. The ladder on which he was to work his way up was to be constructed out of a minute and thorough knowledge of his profession. He experienced a thrill of genuine pride as the thought came home to him that he was now a part of the Daybreak's complement, and he began to grow impatient for the next day to come, when he would be assigned to duty.

A few hours later, it was with great pleasure that Joe received a message from the executive officer to come to him on the quarter deck. After a little preliminary instruction as to what would be expected of him, it was with no little delight that he received the information that he was to be in Mr. Bloomsbury's division, and that he would begin his tour of duty on deck by being gentleman of his watch. His first duty, however, would be to go ashore in charge of the market boat early the next morning. Joe never dreamed that Mr. Bloomsbury had promptly asked that he might be assigned to his division.

## CHAPTER V.

### FIRST DUTY.

JOE'S weather eye was already open when he was called next morning to go ashore in charge of the market-boat. Upon reaching the deck, he found one of the loveliest of the beautiful summer mornings for which Newport is celebrated the world over. The sun was just rising upon Narragansett Bay, and the islands and slight eminences all around were tinged with a deep and brilliant orange. The fishermen were putting off in the first puff of the land breeze, and the sails of the cat-boats were flapping at their single masts as if irritated because no passengers would come to enjoy this luxurious morning upon the bay. Far away toward Point Judith, a fleet of yachts was coming in. Every inch of canvas was shaken out, and the white sails, catching the now broad glow of the morning, flashed in gorgeous colors, according as they came up into or fell away from the slanting light.

But Joe had no time to devote to mere idle gazing. Hammocks had been piped up, and were

already neatly stowed in the nettings, and coffee was now being served out to the crew. To a young officer like Joe, how much more inspiration is there in a cup of genuine Java and Mocha, than in the most brilliant morning that ever shone upon the earth. So at the galley, from a cup of no transparent hue or fragile texture, Joe quaffed the morning beverage of a man-of-war.

With keenest pleasure he listened to the same old babble of other days. There were the same growls of the cooks, the same caustic observations from the stewards over the elusive tendencies of the colored servants, the identical quips and jokes, and sharp, wordy rencounters with which he had formerly been so familiar. Soldiers' camps and men-of-war decks at reveille, from day to day, will witness the enactment of the same lively drama so long as the world shall stand.

Coffee and pipes, apprentice-boy nonsense and skylarking, everything over with but growling, which is as constant as a ship's chronometer, the day's work began. The boatswain, bluff and piping as a nor'wester, roused out the dinghy's crew, and soon, at a distance from the ship, he was canting his head about like a parrot, to see that every yard was square, and every rope marking as straight a line as though it had been drawn with chalk upon a blackboard. The petty officers were hunting up men and boys from their respective

parts of the ship, and many of the said men and boys were scampering for the tops, while others were scurrying swabs, buckets and squilgees along the decks, preparatory to washing down.

Indeed, in the general displacement of things, the ship had an appearance as of the near explosion of a torpedo, which, while it might leave the vessel uninjured, in forecastle parlance, would knock everything into a cocked hat. So with the scrubbing of decks, the creaking of pulleys, as the day's boats were being lowered, the calls of the boatswain's mates for shirkers and blacklisters, the humming of tunes and the occasional burst of a song, the work went merrily on, a medley challenging description.

Some little delay took place in getting the cutter manned. Joe did not know her crew, and a number of them were in no hurry to heed the bugle-call. A sharp reprimand, however, from the officer of the deck sent them out along the boom and down the Jacob's ladder into the boat as if a boatswain's mate were in hot pursuit, armed with the old navy-cat. A moment more and the cutter shot up to the gangway. Taking in her usual load of stewards, market-baskets and pet dogs, with our hero duly installed as cadet in charge, she was off and away.

A dozen or more steam yachts lay in the harbor, and their boats for marketing were likewise

shoving off all around in greatest haste. Their crews bent to the oars as if the gun-cotton stored at the Torpedo Station were about to explode, and they were pulling from an impending catastrophe. But it was only a challenge to the cutter's crew. That crew, however, had already sniffed it in the air, and their blood was up. In a moment the boat was leaping through the water, tossing it at her antagonists in disdainful spray. It was the usual morning contest, and very soon, with every competitor astern, the cutter rounded in to her landing as gracefully as though the race had been a regatta, with thousands of spectators watching it from the shore.

What is generally an inane waiting of an hour or more, while the stewards haggle with butchers and grocerymen and quarrel with one another, proved not without interest or incident to Joe. First, he busied himself with looking at the waterfront of Newport. His powers of observation had been well trained, and he always endeavored to turn them to good account.

It was well for him, as this work began, that he gave momentary attention to the usual habits of the wharves. Though it was early in the morning, they seemed to be out in full force. They stood or sat as quiet as so many idols. Some were holding fishing-rods and pretending to fish. He wondered what the fascination could be which

held these dummies for hours fast to one spot with seldom so much as a smelt to reward them for their toil. But Joe could not appreciate the luxury of perfect repose, nor the simple joy of seeming to do something by doing absolutely nothing.

One of the figures amused him very much. It wore a sailor's rig of fifty years ago, the whole crowned by what had once been a glazed hat. This hat looked as if it had once afforded grazing ground for some kind of insect, and had been so closely cropped that, with the exception of a glazed spot here and there about as big as the head of a pin, it represented a barren waste. The image was furthermore adorned with a wooden leg, bearing every evidence of home manufacture, its whole length protruding from the wharf. Presently the image began to wriggle about, and the leg, which had been carelessly strapped on, slipped off. Joe had been regarding it with curiosity, not to say suspicion, and in the nick of time thought it would do no harm to make room for it in the sternsheets of the boat. And, as acting upon this impulse, he sprang forward, it came down with a tremendous thump, striking the place where he had been sitting.

"Fire that leg up here, will yer?" called the figure-head, in a gruff voice. "It was fortunite you was there, or I'd a lost it."

"It was extremely fortunate," said Joe; "not to mention the fact that it nearly cost me my head."

"Young man, if you don't lose yer head afore it gits mashed by a wooden leg, you'll keep it a long time. If it warn't for them brass buttons, and that ar' sword as you couldn't spear a sculpin with, you wouldn't think so much o' that precious head."

"Well, it's worth more to me than your wooden leg is to you, and I hope you'll be more careful another time."

"Young man," continued the image, very solemnly and slowly, "John 'Bunnion' says :

'He as is down need fear no fall;  
He as is low, no pride.'

"John Bunyan said it, did he? Well, I hardly think he was describing a man in a boat, with a wooden leg coming down on top of his head," said Joe, laughing.

"Young man, don't make fun o' yer betters. You'll live a long time accordin' to my way o' thinkin' afore you're as big a man as ole John 'Bunnion.'"

"I think that's very likely."

"Gimme that leg, and don't stan' there a makin' fun o' me as has to wear a wooden leg, as was

lost in battle, as he's waitin' to git a pension for, an' has to fish for a livin'."

By the time the image had finished speaking, the whole boat's company were in a roar of laughter at his unconscious drollery. Joe could see the old man's eyes flash at this demonstration, and he directed the coxswain to toss back the wooden limb.

"Here," he sung out, "is something that will keep you in fish for one day," and he pitched up a fifty-cent piece, which the old sailor grabbed as quickly as an ostrich would pick up a penny.

The wooden leg having been duly restored, Joe got out his pocket compass, and began getting the bearing of different points and objects around. He had become quite absorbed in this occupation, when he was interrupted by one of the bow oarsmen asking if he might not have permission to go up town. Joe had received strict orders not to allow any member of the crew to leave the boat.

"I beg pardon, sir," said the coxswain; "Conners wants some grog."

Conners was the man's name.

Something had been out of joint with this man all the morning. He appeared sullen and insubordinate, and when the rest of the crew had thrown themselves into the race with greatest zest, he only mechanically dipped his oar.

Our hero gave him a peremptory order not to



leave the boat. But by this time Conners had taken the matter into his own hands, and, having cleared the boat with one spring, he was half-way up the wooden steps leading to the wharf.

"Get back into the boat," shouted Joe, his face flushed and his frame quivering with excitement.

"I'll come back in a minute, sir. I only want to go to the head of the wharf," Conners replied.

Giving a hasty order for everybody to stay in the boat, Joe was out of her in an instant, clearing several steps at a bound. Conners was quite a large man, and very nimble of foot. When, therefore, he saw Joe in full pursuit, he took to his heels, and led him a smart race up the wharf. But he had not counted on our hero's length of limb and athletic training, and by the time they reached Water Street Joe had a solid grip upon his prize, or what he was determined at any hazard, to make his prize. Joe had seen men jump boats before, and on his first trip as cadet in charge, he did not propose to undergo the humiliation of having to report that one of his men had gotten away.

Not many people were stirring about the street. But to Joe's consternation, the few there were began to form in a crowd. Even the dummies left their lines to take care of themselves, and came running up from the wharves. A side glance showed him his old friend with the wooden leg,

bowling along at a double-quick. Joe was exceedingly mortified at all this, but having attempted Conners' capture, he was bound to complete it.

Luckily for him, Conners had no intention of engaging in a pugilistic encounter. Such an encounter would have ended badly for Joe. His antagonist was not yet thirty, and his active sea-life had given him an alertness of movement and hardness of muscle which Joe had not yet acquired. But had Conners been seven feet tall, and proportionately stout, it would have been just the same with Joe. His hand was no match for Conners' hard fist, but Conners knew it represented the grip of the law, and he would have taken almost any risk sooner than that of striking an officer while in the execution of his duty.

He therefore undertook to jerk and wriggle himself clear. But wrench and twist as he would, it only served to tighten Joe's hold upon him. As well might he have attempted in the same way to make a steel trap let go. Several times they lost their footing, but each time Conners regained his feet only to find the invincible Joe hanging to him more sturdily than ever. Finally he gave over the struggle, and was marched back to the boat.

Somewhat out of breath from his severe exertion, Joe resumed his seat in the cutter, the evident admiration of the crew. On two former

occasions Connors had escaped from the coxswain, who was a powerful man, and now to be captured by a cadet, was very humiliating to him, and a high feather in the Middy's cap. While Connors looked very sheepish, Joe endeavored to appear as unconcerned and complacent as possible. By the time the boat, with its huge bags of bread and toppling baskets, was ready to shove off, he was as composed as ever.

On the way back to the Daybreak he was much exercised as to what he ought to do about the affair. If he reported Connors, there would probably be a court-martial resulting, and he thought from Connors' appearance that a court-martial would not reach his case.

"Why not take him in hand myself," he reflected, "and see if I cannot help him overcome his appetite?"

It was evident to Joe that Connors had had no intention of deserting; he only wanted a drink. Joe also knew that a personal interest on the part of officers, in such men as Connors, would do more for their reformation than all the brigs and double irons in the Navy. Besides, there was something about this man that he liked. He certainly admired his fine physique and his great strength, and he did not look like a bad man, although he had not presented himself in a flattering light that morning.

It took but a few minutes to settle the matter. Joe resolved to win Conners' friendship, and thus see if he could not make a man of him.

But his good resolution weakened when he reported the boat's return to the officer of the deck. That gentleman said nothing, but seemed to scrutinize him with an air of displeasure. When he reached his quarters he saw why he had done so. Pushing Swem away from the single glass rather unceremoniously, he took a look at himself. He was in a pitiable plight for a military young man. His coat was torn and dirty, and he had a scratch across his cheek, which Conners had accidentally inflicted, from which the blood was flowing. Swem looked at him in amazement. Coverly, who was sitting at the table eating his breakfast, remarked that he looked as if he had been rolling in the ashes of Pompeii, where the eggs he was eating came from. Harry made an observation to the effect that he must have fallen into the hands of a Bowery tough, who had wiped up a saloon with him. Hubbins roared out that, "whoever he has been fighting with, the evidence is indisputable that the fellow licked him."

As Joe viewed himself in the glass, he began to grow very angry with Conners. His first impulse was to make himself presentable, and go and report the matter at once. But his good resolu-

tion prevailed, and he cooled down. Of course he had to give account of himself to his mess-mates, who, when he had told the story, insisted upon knowing why he had not reported Conners.

"Because," he frankly answered, "I'm going to see if I can't make a man of him, myself."

At this a shout went up from several.

"I'd as soon think of blowing the Puritan out of water with a fire-cracker," said one. "Gentlemen," sung out Hubbins, "let me introduce our temperance sharp, our 'Holy Joe,' our 'sky pilot,' the Rev. J. Bently, Chaplain U. S. N."

"Mr. Hubbins," said Joe, very quietly and firmly, "I did not speak of my intention toward Conners to excite ridicule. And, sir, let this be the first and the last time that you ever apply any epithets to me." With this, he picked up his dilapidated coat and left the steerage.

"Well," said Hubbins, for the instant more chagrined than angry, "that's a plain statement of the case." Then his temper getting the better of him, he began to make remarks not at all complimentary to our hero.

"Bently isn't here to defend himself," said Harry, who, though he had little faith in Joe's scheme for reforming Conners, had not joined in the uproariousness against it; "but if you're hunting round after somebody to run, it will be for your interest not to take him."

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"No," said Swem; "he doesn't scare worth a cent, and he isn't particularly long-suffering."

Arlington was also about to put in a word for the absent cadet, when he reappeared, looking as if nothing had happened. The first thing he did was to ask Hubbins some question or other, which was done so pleasantly that, in spite of himself, Hubbins had to answer it, though he did so rather gruffly. Then he told them about the man with the wooden leg, which set even Hubbins laughing. Presently, good humor being restored, Joe began his preparations for quarters.

A genuine surprise awaited him there, although a very common occurrence in the Service. While standing at the head of his division, during inspection, he happened to glance forward, where he made an almost startling discovery. Standing at the tail-end of the navigator's division, was an old sailor-man who bore the closest resemblance to his friend, old Dicky Dawson. This man was looking straight at him, but without the slightest recognition. Joe was delighted, but he could scarcely believe the evidence of his own senses. If it were Dawson, why had he not come aft and spoken to him the day before? He surely must have seen him about the ship.

Joe's sharp eyes had not deceived him. It was indeed Dawson. He had caught sight of Joe several times, but had been ashamed to show himself.

He was under a cloud, and was in a condition of deep self-abasement. His old enemy had been getting the better of him, and his pride was in the dust ; or, nautically speaking, under hatches. He was just beginning a long period of quarantine, the sentence of a court-martial, which was sorely depressing to him, particularly as he had been recommended to Captain Farradale as the paragon of old sailors.

The instant the drum beat retreat Joe started for the forecastle. Dawson had anticipated this, and acted as if he seemed anxious that the vision which had startled his former boy-friend should be regarded as in the nature of a materialization ; for he was vanishing down a companion-ladder as fast as his unsteady nerves would permit, when Joe reached him. He was making for the forehold, that favorite resort of ghosts and penitents.

But he was right about face in an instant. He had not descended three steps before Joe's hand was clapped upon his shoulder, and he was as securely in custody as Conners had been in the early morning. Joe could hardly refrain from embracing his old friend, and his greeting was so warm that the tears sprang to Dawson's eyes.

It took only a few minutes to get at the cause of all his shyness and depression. It was the same old story—of getting drunk, and while in that condition committing a court-martial offense, for

which he was now suffering the penalty. Joe talked very kindly and encouragingly to him, and told him that his only hope was in resolving to let rum alone.

"I knows it, sir," said Dicky; "but when I gits one drink, it's like as if I was out in a boat in a tide-way; I can't pull ag'in the temptation."

"Perhaps if you and I pull together, Dawson, you can at least be kept from going very far down stream."

"That's what I's ben a thinkin', sir, But I was afeared when I seed ye come aboard with yer shoulder knots an' sword on, that maybe ye would not care no more for the likes o' me. Liker is a awful cuss, sir."



## CHAPTER VI.

### SCHOPY'S SKETCH.

JOE'S first week on board the Daybreak, notwithstanding its press of work, passed quickly away. It was literally crowded with duties, and perhaps in this respect could hardly be taken as a type of the weeks that were to follow. During all this time he had scarcely an hour to himself. Besides the regular drills and other routine work, there was no end of boat duty; he being often called from his meals to go in boats. These summons became so frequent that, whenever he was lucky enough to get to the table at all, he gave free rein to the Pegasus of his appetite, and, so to speak, put the spurs in, too.

To take up the thread of his ship-life, we find him, at the end of the aforesaid week, with the time between dinner, at four bells in the evening, and eight bells, the hour he was to go on watch, absolutely his own. On this particular evening dinner was no sooner over than he promptly started with his messmates for the top-gallant fore-castle, under the break of which the ward-

room and steerage officers had smoking places. On this occasion he had been invited to smoke a fine Havana with Harry.

It must be admitted that Joe was exceedingly fond of smoking. He sometimes practiced it even to excess. He can hardly be expected to hold a lien on all the good habits. But we can safely say that smoking was the worst habit he had. He had provided himself with a monstrous meerschaum pipe, whose complexion he was so anxious to change that, in his effort to do so, he had impaired his own, and was as yellow as his pipe for hours together. But we must overlook this fault in our hero, since we know that in the Army and Navy a very young officer is not expected to be perfect in everything.

Joe would gladly have given himself up to the enjoyment of the splendid evening, but his comrades would not permit it. He had no sooner taken note of the light which was falling in a kind of pink mist, and the delicious quiet which had settled on sea and shore, before his attention was attracted by the conversation going on around him with no little vivacity.

Hubbins was taking Swem to task for having declined an invitation to some social affair or other, to which all the cadets had been invited. "What did the Government put you in brass buttons for?" he said. Then, without waiting a

reply, he went on : "What for? Why, to make a plaything of you. You're a Government toy. Your business is to amuse the girls of the country. Failing in this, you are as much out of place in the Navy as an Irishman under a palm-tree."

The day before, Hubbins had seen a son of Erin seated at the foot of a palm-tree, in transit to some Newport conservatory. The incongruity of this relation had greatly excited his sense of the ludicrous.

"There's Coverly," he continued, with such rapidity of utterance that his breath came and went with an asphyxiated sound ; "you can't keep him aboard ship. Catch him getting left on an invitation to anything. If he did, in the language of the immortal Thackeray, he'd 'ask to be asked'."

"Go slow, Hubbins," said Austey. "You know what Coverly did this morning."

"You'd better let up on our old Schopy, too!" exclaimed Harry, giving Swem a pat on the shoulder.

"I'm not going into society," said Swem. "I haven't the money, in the first place ; and in the second place, I haven't the inclination."

"I can't see why you cannot go into society, and have a pretty good time, too, on nine hundred and fifty a year," said Hubbins.

"Well, I'm hard up, as it is, all the time."

"Hard up! What have you done with your two months' advance?"

"Spent most of it for clothes."

"Clothes," said Joe, "are Schopy's weakness."

"Yes; and every other cadet's," observed Hubbins, a little spitefully.

"Hubbins can't give the cadets a rest," remarked Arlington.

"The idea," proceeded Hubbins, "of trusting boys with such a salary. I never knew a cadet who didn't need his grandmother to tell him how to spend his money."

"Perhaps you can fill her place," interposed Coverly, who was watching to get in a word.

"Well, well," resumed Hubbins, paying no attention to Coverly, "we must get him ashore. Society can't do without him, and he can't do without society. Why, some day he'll have to dance with the Queen of Greece. We must get him in training for that event. Oh! to dance with a queen. Fitting consummation to the life of a naval hero." And Hubbins took a spin around the forecastle, greatly to the merriment of the steerage officers.

"You'd better look out for our old Schopy," said Harry, as Swem vanished from the company. "He's gone below to sketch you dancing with a queen; and he'll pick his queen, too."

"Oh! he adds art to his numerous accomplishments, does he?" said Hubbins, in a tone of sarcasm, not relishing the turn things had taken.

"Hubbins waltzing with a queen," shouted Coverly. And he proceeded to mimic Hubbins' probable attitude and movements on that unique occasion.

A roar of laughter accompanied Coverly's ludicrous mimicry. As usual, Hubbins grew very red in the face, and seemed debating with himself whether he ought to join the general hilarity, or explode in anger. To the surprise of everybody, he remained quiet, and Joe felt that perhaps they were a little hard on him. It was not long, however, before he was off on another tack, indulging in some highly vociferous, if not intelligent opinions.

Weary of this rough loquacity, Joe turned his attention to the wardroom officers. They were smoking on the starboard side. One of them was endeavoring to thrill a solitary listener with some adventure or other he had had in Corea. Another was detailing a humorous affair happening under his own cognizance, which account seemed to fairly revel in French words and phrases; so much so, indeed, that Joe was in doubt as to which language had the upper hand with him, French or English. Finally Mr. Moncrief and Mr. Bloomsbury were hammering away on light

and heavy armor for ships ; and, Mr. Moncrief growing very warm, Mr. Bloomsbury, with charming good nature, closed the discussion by introducing his favorite metaphor. "Well," said he, alluding to the great point of difference between them, "you may stand by your halliards, but I'll stick to the down-hauls !"

Joe got up, and began to pace back and forth along the deck. Most of the crew had come on deck to enjoy the early twilight, and the forecastle was as lively as it well could be. A space had been cleared on the opposite side of the deck, in which a number of sailor lads had embraced, and to the harsh scraping of a violin, were whirling in a merry waltz. Seated on one of the chain bits close by, was an old tar, who was singing a pathetic song in a squeaky, quavering voice, which, to Joe's surprise, as he himself was highly amused, dashed a little spray, as sailors say, into several of the listeners' eyes. At the port cat-head, a coterie of ordinary seamen were settling some dispute or other, with the gravity of a bench of justices. Almost in Joe's ear, a tall, raw-boned sailor was giving an account of his domestic trials. He set forth very graphically how he was driven by a quarrelsome wife into old Neptune's arms for refuge. "She's a reguler whale, ain't she?" said one of his auditors. "She is, and she isn't," was the rejoinder. "She's all jaw, but no blubber."

A roar of laughter followed this characterization. Joe turned away, only to have his attention directed to old Binder. He was leaning on the breech of a gun, and while biting industriously at his pipe-stem, as if what he was saying went against the grain, he was uttering what Joe took to be sentiments of condolence in an apprentice-boy's ear. The boy, it seemed, had settled himself comfortably during working hours, in a number of forbidden places. He was complaining bitterly over the informal manner in which he had been obliged to vacate them. "I can't sit down a minute," he said, "without somebody comin' along an' singin' out: 'Git outen that port'; 'Git offen that gun carriage'; 'Don't you know better'n to sit in a gangway, you lubber?'" What's a feller to do?"

"Take my advice, young feller," said Binder, "an' do nothin' aboard ship as is comfortable."

With a smile, Joe walked aft. Suddenly his attention was arrested by the sound as of some one reading, in between the smoke-stack and the sailing-launch. As nobody could be reading at that hour without a light, Joe peeped in to see who could be guilty of burning a candle on deck, where only covered lights are allowed. Not a glimmer could he discern, but he could just make out in the very dim light, the figures of a man and two apprentices. The boys were prone

upon the deck, their mouths wide open, listening to an exceedingly dramatic recital from some trashy novel. The performance was made most grotesque by the man's peculiar accent and pronunciation. A sentence or two fixed itself in Joe's memory. With an evident desire for theatrical effects upon his young hearers, the man repeated: "'Villyun! villyun!'" he cried, as he clasped his bride to his breast. "Stand back, sir! stand back!" exclaimed she, in all the ardjure of her Southern tem-per-a-ment." Whether the bride addressed the villian or her husband, Joe could not quite make out. But the man's remarkable memory surprised him. He was evidently repeating word for word what he had read.

No sooner had Joe got back to the top-gallant fore-castle than he was forced to listen to a sharp discussion going on among a group of petty officers. The debate was on the best method of getting work out of a ship's company. There was a great variety of opinions. A boatswain's mate, with a voice as shrill as his whistle, insisted that sailors must be "druv" like cattle. "It's 'nag-gingness' as does it," he concluded.

"No, it ain't," said the old foremastman. "I repudiates the insinnivation."

"You may not think so," was the reply, "but others does."

But perhaps Joe was quite as much amused over



an imposing attempt on the part of the wardroom steward, a native of Madeira, to express in English some fine sentiment touching the beautiful evening. At the first unmeaning vocable, a wave of grammatical scorn swept around the fore-castle. Cries of "string him up to the yard-arm" caused the poor steward to gesticulate a wild and angry protest, and in sheer mortification, to dive below. If these men murdered the King's English themselves, they would allow no one to mutilate the corpse, as has been said by some clever man.

Two or three times Joe reached either extreme of his promenade, lost to everything but his own thoughts. Very shortly, however, he observed an overgrown, lubberly boy hanging heavily to a fore-sheet, and staring at him as if he were the latest ornithological specimen from Brazil. As Joe came near him, he touched his cap and asked, "Kin I git a book offen you, sir?"

"Isn't there a library on board?" replied Joe, with but little warmth of manner, for the boy was not prepossessing in either looks or address.

"Yes, sir; but the liberian won't let me have no books."

"Why is that?"

"Coz I tuk one out and couldn't see no sense to it."

"Well, why didn't you return it, and get another?"

"Oh! I thought it was no good, so I chucked it overboard, an' he won't let me have no more."

"What book was it?" continued Joe, quite amazed at the boy's coolness and assurance.

"It was called Danill somethin' or other."

"Daniel Boone?" interrogated Joe.

"No," said the boy in disdain. "What d'yer take me fer?"

"Perhaps it was Daniel Deronda," said Joe, beginning to grow amused.

"Yes, that's it; Danill Dorindy. It was all about Jews. I don't want to read about no Jews. I asked for a book on pirates or Injuns. The liberian want corteous to me. Said I looked as I needed ballast or sand or somethin' like that, an' he'd advise solid readin'. I didn't like what he said to me, so I tuk it out on him. There ain't much civility in the Navy, sir."

"Do you expect civil treatment if you throw books overboard? It's a wonder they didn't clap you in the brig!"

"Oh! they did, sir—three days. But I likes that. I don't git no naggin' in there, an' I don't have to do no work," he added, with a grin. "But a man-o'-war's no place for a smart American boy, sir."

Joe didn't think it was much of a place for the peculiar kind of smartness before him, but he continued, "What made you ship, then?"

"First of all, I wanted to fight fer my country. Then I thought it 'ud be better'n bein' kicked round a stable. That's where I was. Why, sir, it got so that I couldn't pass a hoss but he'd up an' kick me. It seemed like as if everythin' wanted to kick me. So I come into the Navy."

"And you don't find it any better here?" laughed Joe, doubtful whether this boy would not encounter the same propensity for calcitration in every creature endowed with a heel.

"I don't expect to find it no better nowhere, sir, an' I'm jest going to kick, too."

This was accompanied by such a comically retaliative look, that Joe burst into a hearty laugh. "What's your name?" he inquired.

"Enick Long. My father druv the stage, an' hired me out to work in the stable of the proprietor. Said I wouldn't git no scoolin', an' I might jest as well be there. But what made me maddest was, he tuk all the pay. Why, sir, he only giv me five cents the Fourth o' July, an' I a earnin' a barril o' flour a month for the family, besides my own board. The hossler ust ter lick me, an' I turned to an' licked the boy as was younger'n me. I couldn't stan' it, so I up'n runs away."

Joe could not resist the temptation of letting him go on, and asked, "Where did you fetch up?"

"In Boston, sir. On the way, I stopped in the

evenin' at a house, an' asked if they'd put me up. They said they wouldn't put up no boy tramps. 'I ain't a boy tramp,' I said, so I jest tuk a chair an' sot down behind the stove in the kitchen. Says I to myself, if you git me out o' this ere house afore mornin', you're smarter'n I be. Well, they give me some supper, an' I sot round till nine o'clock. 'You jest git, now,' says they; 'we hain't no bed fer yer.' 'I don't want no bed,' says I. 'What'll yer do?' says the woman. 'If you'll git that baby out o' that ar' cradle, I'll show yer what I'll do,' says I. 'I'll sleep in that.' 'All right,' says the woman, larfin' as if she'd die, an' pullin' the baby out, 'git right in.' I tumbled in, an' they larfed till the tears run down their faces."

"I should think they would have," said Joe, affected in the same manner by the boy's narrative. And finding Long's way of telling his story inimitable, he asked, "Did you find the cradle comfortable?"

"The part o' me that was in, did, sir. But I overlapped. The biggest part o' me hung over the rail—I mean the foot," said Long, correcting his nautical with a nursery phrase. "But warn't I scared, though, in the morning. When I woke up, I didn't know where I was. I saw the top o' the cradle, an' I thought it must be a coffin I was in, an' that I was dead." And Long paused with great solemnity. "Howsumever, as I was goin'

to say, I got to Boston all right. I told 'em on the Wabash that I was a poor bootblack as had no father, an' no mother, an' no gardeen. By gracious! but they tuk me quick, sir." Here Enoch looked at himself as if he were a young Hercules or an Adonis, Joe couldn't tell which. Then dropping his voice to a mysterious whisper, he went on: "But I jest wants to say to yer, sir, that I likes the looks on yer, an' I don't want to see no jobs a puttin' up on yer; an' there is a job a puttin' up on yer to-night, sir."

"What is it?" asked Joe, his curiosity greatly excited.

"Oh! I won't tell yer, sir. I never tells no tales."

Joe questioned this strange boy no further, but made up his mind that he would be on the alert for anything that might happen during his watch.

A few moments later he went below. He entered the steerage very quietly; so quietly, indeed, that Swem, who was greatly absorbed in something or other, did not notice his approach. Swem was sitting sidewise on the transom, his back toward Joe, with a large sketch book open on his knee, over a page of which, in the light that fell from a small port, his pencil was fairly flying.

Joe crept up and glanced over his shoulder. He saw that he was fulfilling Harry's prediction.

He was sketching Hubbins engaged in a round dance with a queen. Joe noticed that the queen was very fat, and uncommonly brown. She did not look like the queen of a civilized country, though her costume was European. Evidently she had once been uncivilized, but was not so now. Hubbins had received a good many humorous touches. Taken all in all, the sketch showed that Swem was much more at home with the pencil than he would ever be with the speaking trumpet.

Suddenly Joe's shadow fell across the page. Slamming the book together with a frightened look, Swem jumped to his feet. When, however, he saw who it was, his expression of alarm changed to one of amusement. Going up to the port, he offered to show Joe the sketch in a better light.

"It's a pity, Schopy," said Joe, in sincere admiration of Swem's talent, "to smother a gift like yours in tar."

"I hate the Navy," said Swem. "I'd like to get on an illustrated paper."

"Schopy," continued Joe, laughing at the genuine humor of the sketch, "caricaturing is dangerous business. You must be careful not to let Hubbins see this sketch. He doesn't like cadets any too well, as it is."

"I'll look out and not let him see it," replied Swem, closing the book.

But he was too late. Coverly had been watching them from the outside through the slats. He now dashed into the steerage, and snatching the book from Swem's hand, was half-way to the fore-castle before either of the cadets had recovered from their surprise.

## CHAPTER VII.

### A DESPERATE ENCOUNTER.

THE cadets quickly followed Coverly. Swem, if possible, to rescue his sketch, and Joe to go on watch, for eight bells were now striking. But on the way to the forecastle, Joe was brought to a momentary halt. Strange sounds, coming from the opposite steerage, fell upon his ear. He could see into the place through the open door, and also through the slats, where the baize curtains had been drawn aside to let in the air. Two sailor-lads seemed to have taken possession of it. They had spread out upon the table something that looked like a large blanket, and were engaged in preparing some kind of a bundle, the contents of which Joe was unable to identify in the dim light. The lads were working with a will, in about the same manner as they would do had they been trying to save their effects from a fire.

Joe could not stop to investigate the matter, for it was high time that he reported on deck for the duties of his watch. And no sooner had he reported and started for the forecastle, than all



thought of the affair disappeared from his mind. That part of the ship was the scene of no little excitement, at the bottom of which was Swem's unlucky sketch. Coverly had promptly put it on exhibition, and he was surrounded by a group of officers, who were talking and laughing over it in an hilarious manner. They were unitedly and vociferously pronouncing "Hubbins waltzing with a queen," as by all odds the best thing of the season.

As for Hubbins, he was consumed with wrath. One glance at the sketch, and he had turned upon the unfortunate Swem. He asked him how he dared to caricature him dancing with a "nigger," and heaped upon him such opprobrium that for the moment poor Swem felt entirely crushed. As Hubbins' adjectives multiplied, Swem began to wonder if hanging were not, after all, too good for him; and he would have been inclined to agree with that irate gentleman as to the baseness of the deed, had not Hubbins' anger reached an abrupt and alarming crisis. All at once Swem felt himself seized by the ears and swayed back and forth with more than the swiftness, if not with the regularity, of a pendulum, and when Joe reached the forecastle poor Schopy looked as if he were in the clutches of Apollyon. As Hubbins caught sight of Joe advancing with quick step, he stopped sawing the air with his victim, but contin-

ued to hold him fast by the ears. It was evident from the alertness of our hero's movement that he intended becoming a party to the affair. He seemed to have grown two or three inches taller, and the lightning in his eye was no playful gleam, as he told Hubbins to take his hands off Swem.

"I'll thrash him within an inch of his life," said Hubbins, with an asthmatic struggle for his breath.

"Let go of him," commanded Joe.

Whatever it was that caused him to do so, whether a motive of prudence or the conviction that Swem had been sufficiently punished, it is certain that Swem's release instantly followed Joe's peremptory command. "There!" continued Joe, "don't you lay your finger on him again."

The next few minutes Hubbins devoted entirely to the recovery of his breath.

"Come, Schopy," said Joe, as he started aft, "you'd better go below."

"He'll come down there and have it out with me," said Swem, in a frightened whisper.

"No, he won't. He'll carry it no further. But, Schopy," continued Joe very kindly, "you must not caricature your shipmates any more. Now that I think of it, you'd better assure Hubbins that what you did was in pure fun, and the last thing you thought of was hurting his feelings."

"I'll defer my explanation till my ears get

well," said Swem laconically, carefully feeling of his organs of hearing.

"They do look as if delay would be justified," returned Joe, laughing in spite of himself. "But I'm very sorry for what's happened. I think I owe Hubbins an apology myself. I might have made him let go of you without showing fight."

Joe's indignation at Swem's rough treatment had already abated, and his kind heart was finding excuses for Hubbins. Had not his duties prevented, it is quite probable that he would have gone forward instantly, and sought reconciliation for himself and Swem.

Having gotten Swem safely below, Joe turned his attention to the duties of his watch. He mustered the anchor watch at the capstan, looked after the lights aloft, carefully inspected the boats, bestowing particular attention to the equipment of the life-boat. Should it become necessary to call away any or all of the boats in his watch, he desired to have everything in readiness. Satisfying himself that no detail had been neglected, he next took a look around the harbor to ascertain if there were anything about that could give trouble in the night. If the Daybreak had been a gold mine in his charge, he could hardly have felt a greater sense of responsibility, or exercised a more vigilant care.

When at length he returned to the fore-castle, he

found it deserted by everybody but the regular watch. He had hoped for another interview with Long, but tattoo had sounded, and his would-be tutelary genius was sleeping as soundly in his hammock as he would have done on his turtle-back straw bed at home. The utmost stillness brooded over the ship. So absolutely motionless did she seem that if any one had undertaken to demonstrate that she was only a picture painted upon the background of this beautiful night, Joe would have been indisposed to contradiction.

But he had been ordered by Mr. Bloomsbury, the officer of the deck, to keep a bright lookout for lights. The other ships of the North Atlantic Squadron were expected at Newport that night, and it was hoped that they would come in during the first watch. So Joe took up his beat on the top-gallant forecastle, pausing at each turn to scan the far-away horizon.

But presently he allowed himself to be diverted. One of the great steamers of the Fall River Line was passing. What a splendid vision, Joe thought, as she went flashing by. How nimbly she handled herself in the narrow channel, picking her way as by instinct, bending to each turn, and finally gracefully careening to the last miniature cape, passing which, she swept majestically on. Years before Joe had formed a habit of introspection and moralizing, and the mood was upon him now.

"Ships are wonderful things," he said to himself. "May I be as true to some noble purpose in life as a ship is to its course," he added. Then he reflected, as ships have sun and stars to guide them, so he had great principles and illustrious examples to guide him.

A little moralizing is not bad, especially when it goes no farther than one's self; and Joe was careful that his moralizing should go no farther than himself. But he had many times remarked that it immediately preceded, in himself, at least, a very unpleasant state of mind. This was the case now. The first thing that entered his thoughts after the above meditations, was Schopy's sketch of Hubbins waltzing with a queen. This recalled another sketch made years before. Then followed a whole troop of thoughts and memories of its girlish author. And this would have been exceedingly pleasant but for just one thing, and that was what Joe had been trying to keep a secret, even from himself.

Just here, while the stars grow brighter, and the shores gloomier, and the ship more silent, Joe's secret may as well be confided to the readers of this book.

He had made a startling discovery. It was of no less magnitude than that there existed in him a tender feeling for Katie Aston. We can see how this was the most natural thing in the world,

but strangely enough, Joe could not. He was not aware that with a cadet falling in love is almost a condition of good seamanship. To be sure, he had never known a cadet who had not betrayed this weakness, but he had never till now suspected himself of like vulnerability. He was just as much surprised by his discovery, but in no sense as elated, as a botanist would be at finding an entirely new and original plant. Joe actually regarded himself as culpable for having lost his heart to his young friend, and he was using his best endeavor to destroy, root and branch, this dangerous exotic, as he regarded it, that had sprung up within him.

Joe's state of heart seemed to himself entirely incongruous and uncalled for. In the first place, so he reasoned, if he were a prince he never could be good enough for Katie Aston. This was a very healthy symptom, though he was not aware of it. Then he asked himself if Mr. and Mrs. Aston were to know of his feeling toward Katie, would they not regard him as most ungrateful and unchivalrous—as having abused their confidence and hospitality? What right had he to visit them and form an attachment for their only daughter right under their own roof, and at such ridiculously short notice? If they had suspected anything of this sort they would never have asked him to visit them. Besides, there

was a reasonable probability that Ned Brentford, with the sanction of her parents, too, had already won Katie's affections.

Furthermore, Joe cherished the conviction that there is something akin to unmanliness and very much of selfishness in the desire to take a girl like Katie Aston, born and bred amid luxury, into a life of comparative self-denial and poverty. If by any possibility he were able to win such a girl, what had he to offer her? Joe was a very honest young fellow, and he regarded himself, under the circumstances, as having not the least right in the world to indulge any feeling toward Katie save that of simple friendship.

But he had one comfort in it all. Nobody knew anything about it but himself, or ever would know. This was a special consolation. As he now swept the horizon with his glass, watching for the squadron's lights, he said to himself that he could let this new feeling wither away, and no one would ever be the wiser for it. It would perish as the secret of his own breast.

All at once, however, a horrible suspicion came upon him. It brought with it a great fear. One other knew about this secret. Mrs. Pepper had also made the discovery. Everything mysterious in her conduct was now as clear as day. She had known him better than he had known himself. He recalled her rude opposition to his riding out

with Katie, her distrust of him, her secret enmity toward him. It was enough ; she had seen everything from the beginning. And knowing what she did, she would, of course, "let the cat out of the bag." The Astons would erase him from their books. Their friendship for him was at an end. This theory about Mrs. Pepper seemed absolutely without a flaw.

As he turned the matter over in his mind, he almost groaned aloud. He quickened his pace. Mrs. Pepper had undoubtedly given him a setting out before his friends. What could he do? He was certainly in disfavor, if not in disgrace, with them. A long time he debated the matter with himself, and at last decided upon a course of action. First of all, he would not call upon them for a very long time. He did not know just how long, but it might be a year or two. Then, having written Katie the letter he had promised, he would only reply in a formal manner to such letters as she or her father might occasionally write him. This seemed the proper thing to do, and having adopted it as a policy, Joe became quite cheerful. But what if neither Katie nor her father should write him again? The bare thought almost caused a chill.

Finally he settled with himself that his thoughts of Katie should be utterly destitute of sentiment ; which last resolve, we know, was just about the



same as though he had made a decree that he would eat a whole basketful of free-stone peaches without tasting them.

It is impossible to tell how much farther Joe would have pursued these startling and unhappy reflections, had he not detected what he took to be the dip of an oar at no great distance off the star-board bow. He peered out into the darkness, straining his ears to listen, but nothing further could he hear. Evidently a mistake, he thought, and so dismissed the matter from his mind. Again he was busy searching the horizon for lights, when the same sound was repeated, this time directly under the bows. Taking a quick look down into the water, he saw two men in a small boat, in the act of passing something on board the Daybreak, through the bridle-port. He had no sooner got a good look at them, when the work was over, and the men were quietly getting out their oars, manifestly hoping to steal away unobserved.

“Boat ahoy!” sung out Joe at the top of his voice.

Greatly startled, the men let fall their oars, and without answering the challenge, began with might and main to pull for the town. Joe ran aft and quickly reported the suspicious circumstance to Mr. Bloomsbury.

“Smuggling liquor, no doubt,” exclaimed Mr.

Bloomsbury, in the same breath giving an order to lower the second whale-boat.

"Come, Conners," said Joe, as he made up a boat's crew from the men on deck, "I want you to go with me."

The improvised crew sprang for the davits, and in less time than it takes to tell it the boat was in the water, with the men, followed by Joe, sliding down into her on the falls.

"Don't let them escape," said Mr. Bloomsbury, as Joe shoved off.

"Ay, ay, sir," came back from the boat, and the chase began.

Though the time had been very short in which the whale-boat was being manned, it had afforded the fugitives opportunity for a good start. Pointing the prow in the direction of the city, Joe ordered the crew to give way strongly, and the boat shot off into the darkness. On account of the click of the oars in the row-locks, no sound could be heard from the other boat. The whale-boat, from mere superiority of numbers must gain rapidly upon them, Joe thought. But nothing like a boat could he discover in the outer harbor, and it was impossible for her to have made the inner harbor.

"They have probably crept in close to Goat Island," he said, "or run into the shadow of the breakwater," and changing his course a little, he

brought the places he had in mind directly in view. A few smart strokes sent him near enough to see that the boat had not sought refuge under Goat Island or the breakwater. "Oars," he ordered.

All listened.

"There's a boat pulling off toward Jamestown," eagerly reported Conners.

Conners was all alive to the chase, and pulled and listened as if everything depended on his sharpness of ear and might of muscle.

Every ear was bent in the direction indicated, and presently the faintest sound of oars was distinguished way off toward Conannicut

"Give way," Joe ordered, throwing himself back and forward as he headed the boat in the direction of the sound. Impelled by his sharp orders and determined spirit, the crew threw their weight upon the oars, and in a few minutes they were rewarded by the discovery of the boat at no great distance off the port beam.

"Heave to!" shouted Joe in a tone of command, as he put the tiller hard over, bringing the whale-boat in a line with the other.

"What for?" answered the nearest man in a defiant manner.

"You're my prisoners," said Joe.

"Ha! ha!" came back in a mocking laugh.

By this time Joe had brought the whale-boat

alongside, and had repeated his order to "heave to." As they could do no better, the men rested on their oars and looked at our hero as Goliath might, in the same situation, have regarded David, for they were strapping fellows.

"What were you doing under our bows?" Joe demanded.

"None of your business," was the ready answer.

"What were you doing under our bows?" Joe repeated.

"Fishing."

"Why didn't you answer my challenge, then?"

"It was none of your business what we were doing. This harbor don't belong to the United States Navy. You feel as if you own all creation, anyway."

"You were there under suspicious circumstances, and you're my prisoners. I have orders to arrest you."

"Let's see you do it," said the spokesman, with a fierce oath.

Joe ordered the men to give way a couple of strokes, then to trail oars, thus bringing the gun-wales of the boats together.

"I warn you," said the man, "if you get into this boat, you're a dead man."

Here was certainly a critical situation. Joe was unarmed, and the boat contained nothing more formidable than oars and boat-hooks. And

such unmilitary weapons he would have scorned to use.

"Let me go, sir," said Connors, in his excitement putting his hand on Joe's arm.

"Follow me," said Joe, and he sprang for the boat.

A ball whizzed past his head, and still another; but by this time he had grasped the scoundrel's wrist. At the same time Connors seized him by the throat, and flung him on his back in the bottom of the boat. This was done in season for Connors to plant a blow between the eyes of the other man, who had raised his oar to strike Joe down. Joe now wrenched the revolver out of the villain's hand, and coolly put it in his pocket.

Fortunately for our hero, when he took his leap, the boat heeled over a little under his weight, throwing the man with the revolver back on the thwarts. This diverted his aim, thus without doubt, saving Joe's life. It took but a few minutes to secure the prisoners, and get them into the whale-boat. Joe's men were cool, powerful fellows, and when they saw him covered by the revolver, a couple of them seized boat-hooks and would have made quick work with his antagonist had not Connors overpowered him. The work accomplished, the party now took the captured boat in tow and started on their return, no little elated over their prize.

The two shots had been heard on the Daybreak, and the greatest anxiety was felt to know if anything had happened to any of the boat's company. When, therefore, they marched their prisoners over the ship's side, Captain Farradale and Mr. Moncrief scanned them with grave countenances. When they ascertained that nothing had happened to Joe or any of his men, they felt greatly relieved. But they were very indignant, when Joe gave them an account of the capture, at the audacious attempt to shoot down one of the young officers of the Daybreak.

It was a clear case. While the party had been absent, the smuggled liquor had been found. It was plain to Captain Farradale that these men were at the bottom of all the trouble he had been having from liquor brought secretly on board. A slight pallor was perceptible in the culprits' faces as the captain said to them sternly: "We shall detain you till to-morrow morning. You will then be handed over to the civil authorities. Mr. Moncrief," he continued, turning to the executive, "send them below under sentry's charge."

## CHAPTER VIII.

### BREAKING IN CADETS.

AN hour still remained of Joe's watch. After superintending the hoisting of the whale-boat, he resumed his station on the top-gallant forecastle.

"This has been a rather lively watch," he said to himself. "I shouldn't care for such an experience every night. It would have been rather tame, though, without the shooting. If I'd had the planning of it myself, I should probably have left that out. But now that it's over with, I'm glad it happened. Wonder if there'll be anything more!"

As he thus soliloquized, a movement of the anchor watch below attracted his attention. Some one from the berth deck had joined them, and they were talking in low tones and giggling with suppressed merriment. It seemed to Joe that they were plotting mischief. He tried to hear what they were saying, but could only distinguish such words as "Doctor," "Cadet of the watch," "Officer of the deck," and the like. Listen as he

would, he could get no connecting links. He resolved to keep quiet, and very soon the plan, whatever it might be, was agreed upon, and not another word was spoken. Joe had thought that possibly the liquor smuggling was what Long meant in his warning, but here was another clue. This might be the "job that was a puttin' up on him."

Meanwhile, the Daybreak swung at her anchor, and Joe was obliged to go aft to fulfill his duty as lookout. After the excitement he had passed through, he found this very stupid. The stillness began to have a soporific effect upon him; several times he caught himself yawning, and he wished heartily that eight bells would strike, when he would be relieved of his watch. Ashamed of his drowsiness, he took summary measures with himself to overcome it, and he brought himself in sharp contact with the pin rail. Happening to glance forward as he did so, he saw a sight that in itself would have instantly roused him from his partially comatose state.

Something very white and unshapely was slowly ascending to a point under the fore-yard. It was moving up apparently without aid from any source whatever. For a moment it would hang suspended in the air; then, in seeming defiance of the law of gravitation, it would again go slowly upward. It had a sort of unearthly look, for it



was diffused with light of a somewhat phosphorescent nature. Whatever it was, it had the effect of causing Joe to vigorously rub his eyes, and doubt whether he had fully recovered his senses.

"Go forward, Bently, and see what that is going up to the fore-yard, there," said Mr. Bloomsbury.

The object had now reached the fore-yard, under which it hung bobbing about like a toy balloon. Quickly stepping forward, Joe demanded of the anchor watch what it was that had been run up to the yard.

"Dunno, sir ; 'deed I doesn't," answered a colored apprentice, trembling from head to foot. "I specs it am a ghost, sir."

Evidently he was not in the secret. Joe questioned the other members of the watch, but an atmosphere of secrecy surrounded them. All the time the most unaccountable performances were going on aloft.

"I'll find out for myself," Joe declared, considerably irritated, and swinging himself into the rigging.

But he had no sooner grasped the shrouds than titterings broke out all around, and heads began to appear in the different hatchways. One man from below, who failed to comprehend the situation, sung out, "What's up?"

"Sh!" was the reply. "Breaking in a cadet."

Joe was not to be deterred, and he soon reached

the yard. Meanwhile, the automaton had ceased its gyrations, and had slipped out to the yard arm. The first thing Joe did was to hunt for lines or wires by means of which, he felt sure, the thing was operated. . But he could discover nothing of the kind. He was now poised on the slings of the yard, while the object hung quietly at the tip end, on the starboard side. He concluded that he would go after it. Getting within easy grasp, he made a dive for it. What was his chagrin to see it drop several inches beyond his reach. He grabbed at it for nearly a minute, the titterings below all the time becoming more audible. Again it came up a little, and began to slowly advance toward the slings of the yard. Joe moved after it. It kept on to the opposite yard-arm. He accelerated his speed. This time he was sure he had it, and in the violence of his lunge nearly flung himself on deck. Down went the object the second time, sliding smoothly and quickly back to its first position. Several times it led him this wild goose chase back and forth upon the yard, and at last stopped flush up against the mast.

Joe stopped, too, to take breath and cool off a little. He was in something of a predicament, of which he was disposed to take a comical view. The "job" of which Long had warned him was now easily comprehended. Among his messmates he would never hear the last of it.

How Katie Aston would laugh could she now see him on the fore-yard, close on to midnight, chasing a ghost ! Would he write her about it, and would she sketch him in his ludicrous plight, as Schopy had sketched Hubbins dancing with a queen ? But then, hadn't he decided that he wouldn't write her any more, at least, any more than one formal letter ? And at the mere suggestion, his hold upon the buntwhips to which he was clinging was nearly broken. He decided, however, that he would tell her of this affair. It would amuse her, and help fill up the letter. Glancing below, he concluded that he would not hurry down. Something seemed to amuse Mr. Bloomsbury — in fact, everybody down there, as nearly as he could make out in the dim light, looked pleased.

What was his horror, also, to see Coverly standing just under his perch. Why should he appear at just that instant ? He had stationed himself in the same relative position as the fox in the fable did to the crow. And as the fox, from a purely personal motive, was bent on making the crow sing, so Coverly was determined on make Joe converse.

"Bently ! O, Bently !" he began, "you look very pretty up there."

No answer.

"What are you doing out on the fore-yard this time of night ?"

Still no reply.

"Come, now, tell us what you're doing up there," insisted Coverly, coaxingly.

"Only sitting here," said Joe, very slowly.

"Why don't you come down, then?"

"I can't; I'm on the lookout for the Squadron."

"But you seemed to be chasing something,"

"I was following up a light."

"Red or green," interrogated Coverly.

"Very white," Joe chuckled back.

"Flying Dutchman?"

"No; Aztec juggler."

Just then, as by a preconcerted signal, the blanket covering the object fell fluttering to the deck, and there hung the assistant surgeon's noble from the Court of the Montezumas, with several candles burning brightly in the interior. It had been worked by a very clever arrangement of cords and pulleys; a contrivance which, together with the whole scheme, Joe was disposed to think originated abaft rather than before the mast.

Next morning our hero was awakened by an unusual hubbub in the steerage. As he slowly opened his eyes, he hardly knew whether he was in the Tower of Babel or at a Washington tea. Everyboby was talking in the same breath, and Hubbins, whose slumber could not have been of the sweetest, was on what Coverly called his regular old sea growl.

"Some tomfoolery or other was going on all night," he said; "I hardly fetched a wink of sleep. What the dickens was the matter on deck?"

"The squadron's came in, sir," volunteered the steerage boy, who was blacking shoes under one of the ladders, "an' they was a makin' out the numbers."

"I've known a blockade-runner to be blown out of water with half the fuss," continued Hubbins.

"An' two men was caught, an' there was a ghost, sir," added the boy.

"Ghost! That infernal Digger Injin! No peace now," he went on. "Red tape by the thousand yard, and a grand hullabaloo from morning till night."

"Oh! quit your growling," sung out Coverly from his bed on the port steerage table.

"‘Important naval operations at Newport!’ ‘Grand squadron evolutions at sea!’" pursued Hubbins, "sound well on paper, but you must excuse me. I'd rather take another dive in the Cumberland."

"No allusions to old cruises," yawned Arlington. "But we've got to turn out; here comes ‘Old Mortality.’"

Austey was out on what the marines and mess-cooks called one of his disinfectant tours. "Come, break out here," he said, as he hustled aft. "I

want this deck put to rights. Sleeping in, too," he added, "with the whole North Atlantic Squadron anchored alongside! What are these young officers coming to?"

"These young admirals, you mean," muttered Hubbins.

"Schopy," whispered Joe, who saw that Hubbins' ill-humor was not nearly so great as it seemed, "you're all right."

In a few minutes everybody was out of his hammock, waiting his turn at the single wash-basin. Such composure and patience were probably never seen before, save in the land of Uz. But it was a matter of surprise on this morning, how quickly the mess toilet was made. There was an unusual scarcity of combs and brushes, for which, it was the general conviction, Coverly was responsible; and those who reached the glass first showed a most miserly disposition to monopolize it. When Hubbins therefore reached it, it seemed that he never would give it up. The fact that Schopy was immediately behind him waiting his turn may have retarded his movements.

"Hurry up," sung out Henlington, the last in the line; "I can't wait here all day."

"Let him look at his nose, if he wants to," said Coverly.

Hubbins' nose happened to be his weak point, and Joe began to dread hostilities at Coverly's

allusion. In color it approached a magenta, and at the end it was in what Coverly called its glibous state. Swem had been quick to utilize the information the nose gave of itself in his sketch, and it was this more than anything else that made Hubbins so angry. But in justice to Hubbins, it must be said that he was trying to correct the habit which had wrought this mischief, and his nose was returning to its original form and color.

Strange to say, Hubbins did not take offense at Coverly's remark, and Joe breathed easier. By the good-natured loan of a few collars and neckties, and a light skirmishing around for pins on the part of those who were dressed, in behalf of those who were not dressed, to take the place of buttons that had been off from nine months to a year, the whole mess was at last in a presentable condition.

Joe stepped on deck to get a whiff of fresh air, and to take a look at the squadron which had arrived in the mid-watch. The vessels lay quietly at anchor three hundred yards off the Daybreak's bows. He had seen the great ships of other navies, yet these vessels, even in their inferiority, made a grand picture to him. Several of them were historic; ships whose names will never disappear from the history of the country; ships whose deeds will live in the naval annals of the world.

A good deal of sentiment had Joe, touching men-of-war now, and he felt a sense of injury as Swem and Harry broke in upon his reverie. Harry happened to be cadet of the watch, and was exhilarated by the fine morning, and enthusiastic over the arrival of the squadron. He was fond of the fuss and feathers of military life, and he was now delighted at the harbor-full of ships, promising so much military display.

"Mr. Moncrief," he began, "has been on deck all the morning. He says we are going to have lively old times. Schopy, old boy, you'll wish Sunday was a month long when it comes."

"Why, what's going to happen?" said Swem, his face suddenly clouding.

"Oh! nothing. Only a little of Mr. Moncrief's work, you know; or his and the admiral's together."

"He's going to put his best foot forward," continued Harry, "and show them what the Daybreak can do."

"I presume the ships will be inspected first," remarked Joe.

"Very likely. After that, look out," replied Harry. "This admiral means business. 'He'll get us down to the hard pan.'"

"I fancy," said Joe, "it will all wind up with a grand encampment of the whole naval brigade, and a sham battle."



"Of course it's got to be sham, like everything else in the Navy," said Harry, in a tone of contempt.

"The war happened fifteen or twenty years too soon for Edgerton," said Swem. "He's as blood-thirsty as an old buccaneer."

"He might be one," laughed Joe. "There's the Ouranos. Why not run away with her? I'd be your executive, and Schopy could be your navigator."

"By the way, Bently, did I tell you the Ouranos may be at Bar Harbor in August?" said Harry.

Joe only stared.

"Yes; it's barely possible. If the Daybreak only fetches round there the same time, it'll be the creamiest thing I know of."

Joe did not utter a syllable.

"Of course you'll introduce Schopy and me to that nice little girl you know down there," Harry went on.

"I don't like a flag-ship at all," began Swem at this point, to Joe's great relief. "She's nothing but a watch-dog, anyway. The admiral, captain, and everybody else rides over you rough-shod. See! They're looking at us now, through the ship's glasses."

The admiral and the captain stood upon the flag-ship's bridge, gazing earnestly at the Daybreak through the ship's glasses.

"What does that mean?" asked Harry.

"It means," said Arlington, who had just come on deck, "that the next ten days, we'll be just so many toads under a harrow."

Breakfast over, Joe was summoned on deck with Harry and Swem, to get his daily instructions from Mr. Moncrief. Now that the squadron was in, that gentleman was anxious that the cadets should look alive and secure all data that could be of any practicable help to them in their profession. He told them they must learn something of the history of each ship: her displacement, the number of feet she drew, forward and aft, her coal-carrying capacity, the indicated horse power of her engines, and her highest rate of speed, particularly under sail. In short, they were to let nothing important escape them, and all was to be recorded in their journals.

As Mr. Moncrief, the day before, had given them a full month's work, they did not see how they could properly attend to this new apportionment of duties. But they said, "ay, ay, sir," just as though the time were a dead weight on their hands.

"You see," said Harry, when they got below again, "how it's fixed in my journal," taking the journal out of a drawer and laying it open on the table.

At the top of each page was a large heading

written in red ink, and as Harry turned the pages, Joe read, "Problems in Flotation, Problems in Resistance, Problems in Curves, Problems in Air Currents," and so on, through a large portion of the book.

"It's all problems," laughed Joe.

"You'll never get anything else from Mr. Moncrief," said Arlington, who was standing by, much amused. "At the Academy they used to call him 'Old Problematical.'"

"If he don't let up on me, there'll be a cadet missing from quarters one of these fine mornings," said Swem.

"Only keep yourselves busy," said Arlington, "and he'll be satisfied. What he wants is to have you make a show of doing a great deal. It's the appearance that he's after," Arlington concluded with a smile.

Joe did not believe that he entertained any such view of Mr. Moncrief, but there was no time now to discuss the matter. Before leaving the deck he had been informed that he must stand by for boat duty. The boat had just been called away, and buckling on his sword, he hastened to report to the officer of the deck. His instructions were simple. He was first to go ashore, hunt up the chief of police, and inform him of the affair of the night before, and then return immediately to the ship for further orders.

That the progress of this story may not be interrupted, it may as well be said here that the two men were promptly convicted and sentenced to a term in jail, the plea that in the firing it was only intended to frighten the officer of the Daybreak's boat, saving them from state prison.

Upon his return to the Daybreak, Joe had just time to brush up a little before he was sent on duty to the flag-ship. In something of a tremor he made his way to that august craft. To a cadet, especially a cadet like Joe, an admiral is a being of awful grandeur. What was his consternation, therefore, as he approached the flagship's gang-way, to see both the admiral and the captain standing on the bridge just above it.

He had been informed that the admiral was a great stickler for regulations, particularly in matters of uniform. His face was therefore scarlet as he went over the side, conscious that the admiral was raking him fore and aft through his glasses. As to his personal appearance, Joe was rather fastidious, and on this occasion he looked more than usually presentable. He thought nothing was wanting in his uniform, and he was especially proud of his sword, polished as it was to the brightness of some historic blade on exhibition in a glass case.

"Young man," said the admiral, "you're out of uniform."

Joe turned pale, and could not say a word.

"When you return," continued the admiral, not unpleasantly, "ask the officer of the deck what the omission is from your uniform." Then he resumed conversation with the captain.

Joe knew that this was a hit at the officer of the deck, and wondered what could be the matter with his uniform. He had to wait some time for official papers, and he could do nothing better than stand around the deck. He tried not to overhear what the admiral was saying to the captain on the bridge, but with ill-success. That high official was pointedly commenting on the fact that naval vessels spend entirely too much time in port.

The captain seemed to dissent from his views. He maintained that naval vessels spend enough time at sea for all practical purposes, in making their passages from one country and from one port to another. "Why," said he, "I was once a hundred days in going from Montevideo to Gibraltar; and," he added, "I always feel uncertain, when I have a long passage to make in one of our slow ships, whether I shall reach port in time for the day of judgment."

"What a grand thing it must be," thought Joe, to be able to contradict an admiral."

But the admiral kept right on. "The business of sailors," he said, "is to be at sea; and while I have command, there'll be no yachting in the

North Atlantic Squadron. These young officers know almost nothing about handling ships. They know everything but their business — seamanship.”

What was Joe’s astonishment to hear the captain say : “That’s the easiest learned of all. Ordinary experience will give them a knowledge of seamanship. If seamanship were all there is to an officer’s profession, we might better draw our personelle from the merchant service, and not waste so many years at the Academy.”

“Yes,” said the admiral, seeming to pay still less attention to the captain ; “I venture to say that that cadet standing there, with all his mathematics, couldn’t fish a lower mast, carried away above the spider-band.”

Joe was tempted to touch his cap to the admiral, and ask to be given a trial.

“Or,” continued the admiral with emphasis, “in running before the wind with all sail set, should the mizzen top-sail parrel carry away, to replace it immediately.”

Joe had to admit to himself that this was a poser.

But little more was said. The admiral inadvertently remarked that after a time he should send the Daybreak along the coast, having her spend a number of weeks at Bar Harbor. Joe gave a start at this. A moment later the admiral’s secretary placed in his hand a package of official papers for Captain Farradale, and he took his departure.

## CHAPTER IX.

### FORCED TO A COMPROMISE.

OUR hero was late to mess that day, and but for Dicky Dawson's thoughtfulness, he would have lost it altogether. Dawson was acting temporarily as ship's cook. Knowing that cadets' belated meals are apt to become brown and stringy, and often waste away bodily in galley ovens, he had saved Joe a piping-hot plate of bean soup and a piece of plum duff from the ship's ration. As soon as Joe appeared at the mess-table, Dicky presented his humble offering with much obsequiousness. The hearty thanks he received, therefore, sent him back to the galley as light as a feather.

"That young feller's a regerler sundowner," he confided to himself. "These young bucks has to douse their glims alongside o' him."

Owing to the events of the morning, Joe was a little absent-minded. He started in on the soup as though his mouth had been a moulding for the reception of hot metal. But his boyish encounters with hot potatoes had taught him how to

manage when an accident had given hot food a temporary advantage, and he returned to the table, which the urgency of the moment had obliged him to leave, not much burned. The affair, however, afforded great amusement to Harry, who, beside himself, was the only occupant of the steerage.

"I wish that secret was as hot as the soup," he said.

"Why?" asked Joe.

"Then you couldn't hold it."

Harry had been plying Joe with all sorts of questions. He wanted to learn what he had heard on board the flag-ship concerning the Daybreak's movements. Joe had told him just enough to greatly excite his curiosity. "Come, now, Joey," he urged, "tell me all about it; I won't give it away."

The mess called Joe J. B., Joey B., Joey, and so on.

"The admiral was not talking to me," said Joe, "and I don't like to repeat what I overheard in a conversation."

"Didn't he say the Daybreak's going to Bar Harbor?" Harry asked, fixing an inquisitorial eye on Joe.

To this he received no answer. To tell the truth, Joe was not in a communicative mood this morning. He had worn the wrong sword belt on



board the flag-ship, and in obedience to the admiral's order, had been obliged to tell the officer of the deck what had been said to him about it; and this trivial circumstance, in connection with what he had overheard in regard to the Daybreak's movements, had quite upset him. Truth to tell, however, it was Mrs. Pepper's accompanying apparition that did the mischief.

"Didn't he, now?" persisted Harry.

"He didn't say she wasn't going there," said Joe, forced to a direct reply.

"Couldn't be anything better," said Harry, much pleased, inferring the truth from Joe's inflection.

To Joe's vision, Mrs. Pepper now seemed to be looking daggers at him.

"Bently," Harry continued, "why don't you want to go to Bar Harbor?"

"Did I say I didn't want to go?" Joe answered evasively, looking up quickly.

"O, no! But aren't you all right with the Astons?"

"What — what put that into your head?" faltered Joe, quite overcome by this abrupt question.

"Nothing; only you've been an oyster or a clam the last three days. That's the only way I can account for it."

"We parted the best of friends," replied Joe, his eyes blinking. "But have I been very glum?"

"As glum as our old Schopy when you say Panama or the South Atlantic to him. What have you got to say about it, Schopy?" he added, as that cadet, to Joe's great relief, entered the steerage.

Swem made no reply, but flung himself into a chair, the very picture of despair. He looked so utterly woe-begone that both Joe and Harry began laughing immoderately.

"Why, Schopy," said Joe, "what can be the matter? You look like that last man in 'Whinchell's Sketches of Creation.'"

Swem spoke not a word. It was evident there was no sympathy there for him.

"Come, Schopy, tell us what it is this time," said Harry coaxingly.

"It's everything," said Swem. "But you can't do me any good. I'll keep still and take the consequences."

"No, you won't," said Joe. "Don't beat round the bush any longer, but out with it."

"He's going to send me a challenge," said Swem, feebly, "and I want you to be my second."

At this, Joe and Harry threw themselves back in their chairs and laughed till the tears ran down their faces.

"You seem to think it's a trifling matter," said Swem, an inflection of bitterness entering into his lugubrious tones. "It may cost me my life."

"What weapon are you going to use, Schopy?" asked Harry, with great effort controlling himself to speak.

"He might use old Hannibal," put in Joe.

Old Hannibal, as the cadets had named it, was the sword Swem had been wearing several days. A few evenings before, he had lost his own. In some way its scabbard had caught in between the steps of the ladder as he ran up the gangway, and the blade being violently ejected, had gone, where it were better all swords should be, to the bottom of the sea. As a substitute, Swem was using one loaned him by the surgeon. It was a very hungry-looking weapon. From its appearance it might have been made in ancient Carthage or modern Persia. It was much larger than the sword Swem had lost, and its curvature described nearly the same arc as an Indian bow fully bent. Attached to Swem's ungainly person, this sword afforded endless amusement.

"You could slay old Hannibal himself with that weapon," said Harry, still convulsed over the ludicrousness of the affair. "Just rattle it at Hubbins, and he'll move livelier than he did dancing with that queen."

"Well, Schopy," said Joe, "don't you mind. Hubbins only wants to scare you. It is that sketch, you know. If there's any duelling to be done, I'll attend to it."

The gloom began to disappear from Swem's face. Presently the old look returned, and he appeared more rueful than ever. "There's something else," he added timidly.

"Out with it," said Joe.

"The clothes have come off."

"Oh! and you haven't the money to pay for them," continued Joe kindly. "What did they say about it?"

"They said the ship was going to sail in a couple of days, and if the money wasn't ready by to-morrow morning, the matter would be brought to the captain's attention. I don't want to be reported for debt."

"I don't see how they know when the ship's going to sail," said Harry.

"They know everything," growled Swem.

"They certainly seem quite familiar with your impecunious condition," returned Joe.

"They wormed it out of Hubbins, no doubt," observed Swem. "He has a grudge against us for drawing our money and spending it as we like. It's none of his business, anyway."

"How many suits were there?" asked Joe.

"Only three, and an overcoat," replied Swem:

"A ridiculously small number," said Harry. "Why didn't you carry away the whole store, Schopy? It's strange that they should want their pay."

Against the positive orders of the officer of the deck, Swem had forsaken his boat and gone up town, spending a long time in selecting the goods for his suits. Joe had heard about this and took him to task for his extravagance and disobedience of orders. He preached quite an uncompromising sermon over the affair. Overhearing a few of his earnest words, Coverly asked him why he didn't vary the exercises by singing a hymn. But now Swem was in real difficulty, and Joe did not propose indulging in any recriminating thoughts or words.

"I have a plan, Schopy," he said at last, seized with a bright idea as Arlington appeared on the scene, "if you'll agree to it."

"Oh! I'll agree to anything."

"Well," said Joe, laughing, "I propose that Arlington, Harry and myself, constitute a committee of finance, to take charge of your affairs. What do you say to that?"

"Say?" said Swem, all acquiescence.

"We'll pay for the suits out of our own money. You are to turn over to us all your receipts; and after paying your mess-bill, and allowing you an allotment for spending money, we will reimburse ourselves from month to month with what is left.

"Oh! I'll agree to that," cried Swem eagerly.

"But, furthermore, Schopy, you must also agree not to run up any more bills, and to make no pur-

chase that amounts to anything without consulting the committee. What do you say to that?"

"O, no! I won't agree to that part of it," said Swem. "I don't want to be obliged to run to you about all my little bills. I'd a good deal rather be in debt."

"Oh! well," said Harry, "we would as lief let the captain settle the matter."

"I'll agree to it," said Swem, forced to this alternative by Harry's bit of irony.

It took some little time for Joe to talk Arlington and Harry into accepting all his arrangements; but they finally yielded and became members of the committee. "Now, gentlemen of the committee," he said, "it's all settled about the bills. There is another matter which demands our attention at once. Schopy must have a new sword."

"By the way, Schopy," said Harry, "what were you sent back from the flag-ship for this morning?"

"On account of that infernal old Carthaginian sickle I had to wear."

Swem had fared a great deal worse than Joe at the admiral's hands.. No sooner had he stepped over the flag-ship's side than the admiral caught sight of his huge sword.

"Go back, sir," commanded the admiral, "and return to me in proper uniform."

"Is there anything further to come before this committee?" asked Arlington, when the merri-

ment over Swem's episode with the admiral had subsided.

"Schopy ought to be provided with a blue-book," said Harry.

About eleven o'clock that morning, Swem had been sent into the cabin to report that a boat belonging to a captain of one of the other ships, who was on a visit to the Daybreak, was ready at the gang-way.

"Mr. G——'s gig is ready, sir," said he, addressing Captain Farradale.

"Mr. G——'s gig is ready!" repeated Captain Farradale with emphasis.

"Yes, sir; Mr. G——'s gig is ready at the gangway."

"Go below, sir," said Captain Farradale, "and see if the regulations allow you to address a commanding officer as Mr."

The business of the committee having been transacted to Swem's satisfaction, as well as their own, Joe went on deck. Mr. Bloomsbury was also there. As soon as he caught sight of Joe, he cautioned, "You'd better look alive," and with a beaming face proceeded to volunteer information which this young man had already received. "The ship's going to be inspected this afternoon. This admiral never gives any notice. When anything's to be done it's the word 'go' with him. It's a little old school, you know, pitching in when you're

only half prepared. But the danger nowadays is, that there'll be too much preparation."

"I believe they're coming now," exclaimed Joe, with a hasty glance toward the flag-ship. For the admiral and his staff were standing on the quarter deck in full epauletted splendor, waiting to embark.

This discovery from the Daybreak's deck was simultaneous. A wonderful transformation was effected by the sight. In a twinkling the ship's company were properly uniformed and equipped for the occasion. They were at quarters almost before the admiral had shoved off. As he came over the Daybreak's side, it was as if a curtain had been suddenly lifted, showing the ship in pantomime.

From his station Joe could take in the entire deck. Although a commonplace sight, he nevertheless felt a justifiable pride in it. It was a picture to him. His eyes fairly sparkled with the pleasure it gave him. There was the boatswain with the side-boys at the gangway, the drummer close by, the long, even lines of shapely, stalwart men, the marine-guard fully plumed and accoutered, with the captain of marines and Coverly in front, splendid in their richly-ornamented dress, and lastly Captain Farradale with his officers, looking as if they had been melted into their close-fitting uniforms.



But there was little time to contemplate. Suddenly the boatswain blew his whistle, the drummer rolled off his ruffles, the marines presented arms, the executive officer mounted the bridge and gave orders to the gunner on the forecastle, who made the harbor ring with an admiral's salute, and the inspection began in earnest.

Had the admiral been an astronomer at the Cambridge Observatory, on the lookout for a new comet, he could hardly have given the sky more minute attention than he now awarded the Daybreak. He covered his cocked hat with cobwebs, and his coatsleeves were well touched up with whitewash, but he saw all there was to be seen. Everybody on deck perspired, for the day was hot, but he passed through a period of exudation as trying below.

At last he emerged from the berth deck, and turning to Captain Farradale, he quite won the cadets' hearts by the compliments he paid the officer on the excellent condition of the Daybreak, and the fine appearance of her crew. As he left the ship, Joe saw him glance sharply at Swem, who was quite near the starboard gangway, conspicuous alongside the surgeon's gigantic side-arm. But whatever may have been his thoughts, the admiral said nothing, a surprise to all who knew him. As soon as he was out of the way, Mr. Moncrief turned to Swem before the assembled

ship's company and asked, "Is that your sword, sir?"

"No, sir," replied Swem, turning pale; "it's the surgeon's. I lost mine overboard."

Mr. Moncrief evidently thought it was punishment enough to be obliged to appear like a Lord High Executioner, or a Bashi-bazouk, for he said nothing further. And Swem gave a great sigh of relief when the order came to pipe down.

But a few moments were allowed for every one to get back into service dress. As the admiral left the Daybreak he quietly told Captain Farradale to stand by for any number of exercises, and he had not much more than reached the flag-ship before an order was signalled to all the vessels to at once abandon ship. Here was an opportunity for competitorship, and nothing so kindled the enthusiasm of the Daybreak's crew. A hot contest was sure to follow, in which she was generally victorious.

For a moment all was still, then as the order rung out from the flag-ship's bridge, there was a dash for the boats like the rush of boarders over an enemy's side in battle. Joe's station at this exercise was in the sailing launch. She was resting snugly inboard on her cradles, and in a moment he was toiling as if all depended on him to get her into the water. In this exercise every thing is done likely to be required in abandoning a found-

ering or burning ship at sea. There was a great splashing of life-rafts, catamarans and boats, alongside, a lively scampering to get breakers of fresh water, bags of bread, nautical instruments, and so forth, in the respective boats, and presently the order was given to embark. A moment more and the Daybreak's sides were bombarded with boat-hooks, and the flotilla pushed off into the stream. Up to this point everything had been done with great promptness, and the Daybreak's crew led those of the other ships.

"That was well done!" exclaimed Mr. Bloomsbury, who was in command of the sailing launch.

"It's a bad beat for the other ships," said Joe, delighted that the Daybreak's crew had been the first to embark.

By this time the usual afternoon breeze was blowing in strongly from the sea, making the harbor very hubbly, as sailors say. The store of provisions in the launch was very light, but her load of men and boys was very heavy. She was carried under almost to the gunwales and began to take in considerable water.

"I think I'll go back," laughed Mr. Bloomsbury, "and take my chances on a grating or a halyard rack. Conrad," he continued, looking comically at the coxswain, "how many days' rations have we? It's a thousand miles to the nearest island, you know, and we don't want to eat up the boys."

All the boys in the boat laughed but one. He looked considerably frightened. But a colloquy taking place between Captain Farradale, who with a few ship-keepers had remained on board, and a couple of firemen in a catamaran, now drew their attention away from the launch.

"Catamaran there!" hailed the captain.

"Ay, ay, sir!" called back one of the men.

"Have you any provisions on that catamaran?"

"Any what, sir?" shouted the man.

"Any provisions—anything to eat," said the captain quite sharply.

"Yes, sir," was shouted back, as if his meaning was fully comprehended now.

"What is it, then?" called the captain, a little angrily.

"Swabs, sir," sung out the man.

"There's a signal going up at the flag-ship's mizzen," said Joe to Mr. Bloomsbury, still laughing over the incident of the swabs.

The admiral wants to see his mosquito fleet under sail," said Mr. Bloomsbury, as he read the signal to proceed around the harbor under sail.

Masts were now stepped, jibs and mainsails run up, and in a moment or two the boats were laying over under a spanking breeze, cutting huge diagrams over the harbor. It was a fine sight to see them sporting in the broad water spaces among the ships.

Suddenly every eye was riveted on the cutter of which Swem was in charge. He was cracking on with surprising recklessness, driving the boat through the water almost on her beam ends.

"There's a capsize for you," said Joe, as the cutter flew past the launch which was poking along like a huge turtle.

"Ease off your sheets," sung out Mr. Bloomsbury, as a puff of wind carried the cutter's rail under water.

But it was too late. The sheets jammed, the tiller was put over the wrong way, and the cutter went down bows on, leaving nothing visible but the mast-heads to mark the spot where she disappeared.

As luck would have it, enough of the masts were left standing out of water to afford holding places for the men and boys, who instantly came to the surface and surrounded them. Several who had been swept under the sails, and two or three who had become entangled in the ropes, displayed great presence of mind in working themselves clear. But all of them were pretty well exhausted when they reached the surface, and one or two, but for the timely exertion of the good swimmers, would have gone down again.

The launch happened to be the nearest boat, and in a moment was at the scene of the accident. As the men and boys, struggling in the water,

were hauled in, Mr. Bloomsbury, satisfied that the worst part of the disaster was the loss of the boat, was quite humorous over the affair. Swem was the last one fished out. Mr. Bloomsbury would not let him be hauled in until all the others were rescued; "for the captain is always the last to leave his ship," he said.

"Boy Long's drowned, sir," sung out an apprentice, evidently more excited than grieved over the event.

"It's a lie — I hain't neither," sung out Long, who had been stuffed in between the thwarts so as to be nearly hidden.

A general recall now appeared, and the boats returned to their several ships. When the Day-break's crew was mustered, the flag-ship asked by signal if the cutter's crew had all been saved. "All have answered to their muster," was signalled back.

## CHAPTER X.

### A SPENT SHELL.

THE next twenty-four hours Joe's head was fairly in a whirl. First of all, he was obliged to take Schopy's mid-watch, or rather he volunteered to do so against the protestations of both Arlington and Harry. The necessity for doing this grew out of Schopy's indulgence in too large a piece of plum duff.

Dicky Dawson had observed Joe's strong friendship for Swem, and as a compliment to Joe, had bestowed upon Schopy an enormous piece of this sailor luxury, thus cheating boy Long out of his lawful ration. It happened that this particular plum duff, from which Joe had thought it prudent to abstain at the breakfast already described, was a failure.

In case the other ammunition gave out, the men remarked, in time of war it might have been used in continuing a siege. It is reasonably certain if the inhabitants of a large city had seen it falling among them during socialistic demonstrations, they would have been put to flight, easily

mistaking it for dynamite or gun cotton. But this was nothing to Schopy. He was hungry, and what was plum duff for?

Boy Long bitterly complained to Joe of the fraud that Dawson had perpetrated upon him, and wound up his observations with the remark, "These young officers is awfully stuck up, sir, but they hain't no better'n we be, be they, sir?" meaning, Joe took it, the apprentice-boys.

But taking Schopy's mid-watch was not all of Joe's extra duty, by any means. Somehow or other, nearly all the special boat duty fell to him. There were so many trips sandwiched in between the regular boat-running that it kept him as busy as a ferryman. Then, too, when it became evident that the squadron would soon be under sailing orders, as the newly-elected caterer of the mess, he had to lay in fresh supplies and pay all outstanding bills. Schopy's debts, meanwhile, gave him no little trouble.

In addition to this, Mr. Bloomsbury and Mr. Moncrief, not realizing that there could be any limit to a cadet's capacity for work, heaped upon him many little tasks, insignificant in themselves, but making large inroads upon his time. The wardroom officers liked Joe's way of doing things. His energy and uniform good-nature and courtesy, won him many friends among them, but in consequence, more work was put upon him than any



two cadets ought to do. But he neither grumbled nor lost his temper. He realized that he was all the time learning his profession, and he was by no means sorry for the experience he was getting.

It would not be a faithful record of our hero's feelings to say that his sensations were not those of relief and gladness, when toward sunset next evening, the Daybreak, with the other ships of the squadron, steamed leisurely out to sea. Joe was at his station in the main-top, his thoughts busier than his hands. The ship not being under sail, there was nothing special for him to do.

The day had been quite an eventful one to him. In the press of getting the ship ready for sea, he had found barely time to write Katie his promised letter—the one he felt sure would be his last, unless she should urge further correspondence. Without such urging, it seemed to him, he would have no right to address her another letter. Indeed, he felt almost certain after Mrs. Pepper's probable warning to Mr. Aston, that he would not again hear directly from any member of the family. The thought fairly made him shiver, although the thermometer stood at eighty degrees.

Another thing which had contributed to his disquiet was Harry's plump question of the day before. He remembered that Harry's cousin was Katie's friend, and that two days previously he had received a letter from her. He recalled

Harry's keen look, and the peculiar inflection of his voice as he put the question, and he wondered if any hint had been given in the aforesaid letter of the evident surmisings of the Astons in regard to himself. If nothing else had done so, he now thought possible that his confusion in Harry's presence might have given him the impression that something was wrong.

And then he thought, What if the Celeste should be at Bar Harbor when the Daybreak arrived? How then could he avoid seeing his friends? And if they should treat him with indifference, how could he endure it? Joe fairly groaned as he reviewed the unpleasant relations that Mrs. Pepper's active and meddlesome agency had, he now believed without the shadow of a doubt, established between the Astons and himself. So up in the quiet top he went over the whole ground of his troubles again, feeling not one whit the better for it.

So absorbed had he been in the above thoughts that he had scarcely noticed anything around him. The squadron was all aflame in the glorious sunset. Spars, stays and cordage seemed shafts and lines of gold in the brilliant light, yet he had not heeded the splendid effect.

Neither had he been conscious that he was forgotten by the officer of the deck, and ought long ago to have been relieved. The thing at last

which really called him to his senses was the fact that he had eaten scarcely nothing since the early morning. The appetite of a naval cadet seldom participates in his mental troubles; and when at last from his lofty perch he caught the wandering eye of the officer of the deck, and received an instantaneous order to lay down from aloft, he did so with little ceremony. A moment later he sat at the mess-table, and, as in the case of a more celebrated J. B., "like a giant refreshing."

He got only the fag end of things, however, as dinner was nearly over when he came in. Everybody was unusually quiet. Coverly had left the table, and sat on the transom coaxing a refrain out of his zithern. It seemed to Joe like a lament over the departed social joys of Newport. Hubbins lingered over his dessert, quiet, but now and then casting an unforgiving eye at Swem, who looked as unhappy as ever. Cardington, never having been to sea before, was very melancholy over the heavy swell which the Daybreak occasionally rolled her ports under. The whole mess was present but Austey, and nobody seemed in any mood for talking.

"When I was in the Cumberland," began Hubbins, more to break the silence than to finish an incident from his experience on that ill-fated ship, "I" —

A shout of expostulation followed.

"We've read all that," said Coverly, flinging his zithern into a corner. "Tell us about your early contemporary, John Paul Jones, or some of your experiences in the war with the Barbary States."

Without saying another word, Hubbins got up and left the steerage.

"I'm sure," said Joe, "we ought to be more respectful toward Hubbins. We know he has a violent temper, and we ought to be all the more careful not to offend him."

Joe had had a little talk with Hubbins, regarding the affair of the sketch and his own heat over it. He assured him that Swem did not mean to be disrespectful in his caricature, and that he had already destroyed it. Joe, of course, knew that the challenge which Swem had so much feared was pure fiction, originating in Coverly's teeming brain. Thinking it might prolong the fun, Coverly had undertaken to persuade Swem that Hubbins' vengeance could only be appeased by a meeting ashore of a private and sanguinary nature.

"He's only grumpy," said Coverly. "He has not got over that Queen of Greece business, yet."

"Oh! Schopy," said Harry, "what did Mr. Moncrief say to you to-day about the cutter?"

"Said I'd got to learn to sail her if it took a year. He'll send me out in the next gale of wind, I suppose."

"Capital," said Arlington; "it's Captain Farradale's idea. He'll keep you at it till you're the best sailor in the steerage."

But the deepest gloom rested on Swem's countenance. He did not enjoy the prospect.

"Don't fret about it, Schopy," said Joe. "I heard Captain Farradale say he never regrets such accidents when nobody's drowned, as in your case. 'The quickest way to learn seamanship,' he says, 'is by accidents.' Next time just take old Dicky Dawson along. The boat isn't built that can drown him."

"You'll never be drowned, Schopy; you're born to be hung, you know," said Harry.

"Let's christen his cranky little craft," said Coverly, springing to his feet. "Gentlemen, what shall we name her?"

"The Kingfisher," laughed Harry; "she went under like a bird."

"The Little Dipper," said Joe.

"The Diver," suggested Arlington.

"I have it! I have it!" exclaimed Coverly. "The Godiva—The Lady Godiva. We'll christen her the Lady Godiva."

"Good enough," went up with a shout.

"And now I propose three cheers for the gallant skipper of the Lady Godiva," said Harry, jumping to his feet.

Had the tempest of fun that now shook the

steerage, been a proportionate disturbance of the natural elements, it would have sent the Lady Godiva or any other small craft to the bottom in a twinkling.

"The hexecutive hoffer says will the young gentlemen please not talk so 'igh," said an orderly, late from the Queen's service, putting his head inside the door.

There was a momentary lull; then the storm rose to its original height. This time it was silenced by a peremptory order.

"Well," said Coverly, as he rose to leave the steerage after the orderly's second appearance, "the Lady Godiva's been in all sorts of scrapes — run down, capsized, swamped, had her back broken, and I don't know what. Schopy, old boy, I'll say good-by to you now," he concluded abruptly, extending his hand to Swem with a look of comical resignation.

[It may be well to mention, just here, that the cutter, which had gone down through Swem's bad seamanship, had that morning been raised, and was now hanging safe at the Daybreak's davits.]

Harry and Joe followed Coverly out of the steerage, all three making their way to the top-gallant forecandle. Evening had now fully set in, and such an evening as is seldom seen in the North Atlantic. The moon had just risen, and lit up the broad expanse of water with indescribable

beauty. The evening star hung upon the horizon just ready, in seeming disdain of the broader and more common light, to drop from view. All around were yachts and merchantmen, every sail set, the cloudy canvas shining in the moonbeams like the silver drift moving so lazily through the sky. Joe had never seen such a perfect night at sea, and he stood looking out upon the ocean in a state of rapture.

"The admiral won't let such a night as this slip by without some lively work," he remarked.

"See!" exclaimed Harry, "there goes a signal now."

A "Very"\* signal that instant shot from the flag-ship four hundred feet into the air.

"Form in single column," Joe read from this color-telegraphy, as it might be called, as the ciphers followed each other in rapid succession into the sky.

The vessels which had been sailing in no particular order, now proceeded to form in single column.

"Now for the naval tactics!" exclaimed our hero, greatly delighted at the prospect.

In a kind of transport he and Harry stood reading the different orders of the commander-in-chief, in the bright colors which, from time to time, were projected into the sky.

\* The name of the inventor of this signal.

"I guess he's going through all the formations," observed Harry, as the signals multiplied, and the whole sky seemed interjected with the pyrotechnic symbols.

If there was an order of battle in which the ships did not now arrange themselves, it was unknown to Joe and Harry. And the movements were quite intelligible to them. They had been picking them up from the war game in which they had been invited to participate several times. For a long time the ships proceeded to manœuvre in line, in column, in echelon. Now they were in offensive order or order of chase, now in defensive order or order of retreat. At one time they would forge ahead as if in pursuit of an enemy; then they would fall into position as for the protection of a convoy.

The scientific knowledge displayed by these fledgelings on the top-gallant forecastle was altogether bewildering. They talked about the co-efficients of speed, the co-efficients of helm, and so forth, in a way that would have amazed Lord Nelson or Commodore Decatur, had either been present as listeners. But if we cannot, with Joe and Harry, appreciate the scientific features of this display, with them we can be impressed by the splendor of the scene; the glorious night, and the stately ships moving in such perfect order upon the beautiful moonlit sea.



"Things will be livelier to-morrow," said Harry. "I guess I'll turn in now. I've been out of my hammock just eighteen hours," he added, yawning and looking at his watch in the bright moonlight.

"I think I'll ask for an hour's extension," said Joe. "Mr. Bloomsbury told me to give my days and nights to torpedoes."

Joe was granted the extension, which meant that he could burn his candle till eleven o'clock. He reached his quarters just in time to roll Schopy back to the middle of the table, on which he lay sound asleep. The rolling of the ship had carried him perilously near the edge. This danger, Joe presumed, was what Coverly alluded to when he spoke about sleeping on the table. A sleeping middy, should he fall from his perch, whether it be a cot, hammock, or table, generally lights on his nose, and Joe knew that a disfigured nose in the Navy is usually extremely uncomplimentary to its possessor, and decidedly inimical to his promotion.

But in a few minutes he was completely absorbed in torpedoes. Mr. Bloomsbury, with whom he was associated a great deal in the way of duty, advised him to give all the attention possible to torpedo warfare; and Joe was acting upon his advice, and studying under his direction. But as usual when he sat down to study, he was destined to interruption. He was no sooner hard at work

than the engines came to a sudden standstill. This was followed by a low call from the officer of the deck for the drummer to stand by to beat to general quarters. Giving Swem and Harry a shake, and telling them in a whisper what was about to take place, Joe hastened to get his sword and a navy revolver, that he might be the first officer at his station when the call should be given.

Night exercises at great guns on board a man-of-war are kept a profound secret as to the time of having them. The reason is, to insure prompt intelligent action on the part of officers and crews. War is full of surprises, and the personation of war, so far as practicable, is the chief business of military establishments in time of peace. Naval artillerists are to be so perfect in their art that, on the darkest night, without even the aid of a battle lantern, they can execute as good work with a ship's battery as in the broad day — at least, this is the way Joe explained it in Aroostook County.

The Daybreak's crew had been putting this and that together, and, while the watch on deck were all ready to spring for their guns, the watch below were sleeping with one ear open. They all possessed a fondness for general exercises which amounted to a passion. Joe could hear the men below slipping stealthily out of their hammocks, and feeling around after their shoes. There was

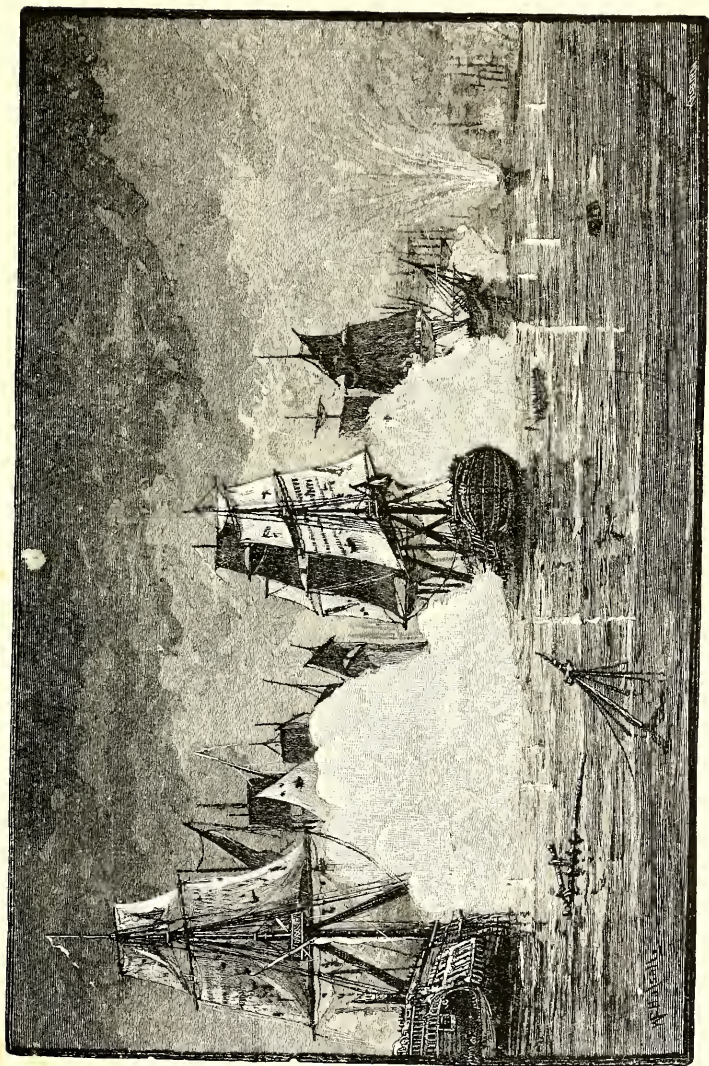
that almost audible stillness by which he knew that every man and boy was aware of what was going to take place. He laughed outright to see old Binder with his fingers in Enoch Long's hair. Long had become so engrossed in preparing himself for action that by mistake he had put on Binder's shoes, and in the above summary manner Binder was trying to lift him out of them. In the steerage, Schopy was knocking about trying to recall where he had left his trousers, which, for the life of him, he could not do. Joe good-naturedly lent him a hand in the search, and in a moment found them in a corner, fastened down with a dumb-bell.

"Wouldn't it have been dreadful, Schopy," he said, "if you had had to go to your quarters without them?"

All this time the Daybreak was waiting to catch the first beat of the flag-ship's drum. Presently it came. Its quick vibrations sounded over the water, the drums on all the other ships rattled off the call, and fifteen hundred men sprang to their quarters as if on a call to actual battle. The exercises were to be as though the squadron had been attacked suddenly, and had to fight at close quarters; and everything was to depend on rapid firing. The ship that got in the first shot, and the gun's crew that fired it, would be the champion ship and crew.

No stronger incentive was necessary to keep the Daybreak's men breathless with excitement, while in divisions of gun's crews they waited the order, "Cast loose and provide." The ship was now so still that nothing could be heard but the low lapping of the sea against her sides. Joe stood at his gun all keyed up for the contest, determined that his gun's crew, if possible, should win.

In low tones Mr. Moncrief delivered the orders from the bridge. Everything moved like clock-work. The powder from the magazines was on time, and the guns were handled with the perfect ease which comes from constant practise. Joe had spared no pains in instructing his gun's crew, and he now watched them like an eagle to correct the slightest blunder that might occur. No sooner had the rammers sent home the charge than in his anxiety to score the first shot at the word "prime," he seized a priming wire himself, and making sure that the vent was clear, inserted a primer in it, then, taking the lock-lanyard from the gun captain's hand, he stood waiting the command, "fire!" from the bridge. Repeating it after the executive officer when it was spoken, he brought the hammer down with tremendous force, and the suppressed murmur of exultation from his gun's crew told to whom the championship belonged. A brisk cannonading ensued. Ship after ship



A BRISK CANNONADING ENSUED. *Page 158.*





thundered whole broadsides of blank cartridges off into the stillness of the night. In time of war the report would have sent consternation into the cities and villages on the contiguous islands and mainland.

According to the usual course of night quarters at sea, all was passing well, and orders were about to be given, calling away marines, riflemen and boarders, as provided for in the ordnance instructions, when an incident occurred, but for which, all this commotion would have been a commonplace man-of-war exercise. Just as the last gun of the Daybreak's battery had been discharged there came crashing through the rigging something that might have been a meteorite, or it might have been a spent shell. At least, this was the first thought of the startled officers and crew, as it tore its way down to the deck. With a tremendous thump it shook the Daybreak from stem to stern. Fortunately it struck just over a heavy timber, which prevented its breaking through the deck. Tearing up the planking all around, with a slight, ricochetting motion, it rolled aft. A bright glow at one end of this object instantly showed that it was a shell fired by accident from some other ship. If the doctor's skeleton had as suddenly appeared, and begun a promenade from top-gallant forecastle to cabin, the sensation would not have been so profound as that now produced by the abrupt

appearance of this strange visitor. On it went, setting men and boys scampering out of its path in the liveliest manner. Enoch Long had a call to the tip end of the bowsprit, and Swem seemed very anxious about something in the same direction. Presently, after turning to wreck and ruin a large portion of the wardroom hatch coaming, it stopped, and hung just ready at a slight roll or pitch of the ship to fall below, where it must have instantly exploded just forward of the magazine.

The shell happened to stop just abreast of where Joe stood superintending the securing of his gun. From the instant it bounded through the rigging he realized the imminency of the danger. He quickly made up his mind as to what would have to be done. If the shell should explode it would be a terrible accident. There were white faces all around. Suddenly the shell stopped, poised directly over the hatchway. Another roll of the ship would send it down. Joe saw his opportunity. Having previously cast aside his sword, he sprang for the shell. Catching it at either end he swung it from the débris, and ran with all his might across the deck to the nearest port, from which he launched it into the sea. A cheer, which neither Captain Farradale nor Mr. Moncrief felt inclined to suppress, greeted our hero's prompt and gallant action.



## CHAPTER XI.

### A MYSTERIOUS VOICE.

THE shell which fell to the Daybreak's deck had been accidentally left in the gun from which it was discharged during some former exercise at great guns. As it now went screeching through the air, the greatest consternation prevailed lest it should find a target in one of the other ships. All listened breathlessly for the explosion which it was thought would surely follow. A great sigh of relief went up when it became certain that the fuse had either gone out, or the missile had prematurely struck the water. The vessels nearest the Daybreak heard it as it entered her rigging and fell with a heavy thud to her deck, and a fearful casualty seemed for the moment inevitable. As Joe deposited it in that safest of all magazines, the sea, he caught the gleam of several glasses pointed at the Daybreak in sure expectancy of her going up, or rather down.

Before our hero had recovered his equipoise, the cheer having had a worse effect upon him than

the shell, Captain Farradale added to his embarrassment by calling him forward and thanking him most cordially for what he had done. This was followed by congratulations from the different officers in painful profusion. But the worst of it all was after the drum beat retreat, he was forced to be present at an improvised spread in the ward-room, at which he partook so bountifully of *paté de foie gras*, that shortly after, when he went on deck to relieve Cadet Austey for the mid-watch, he wondered whether he did not feel more like the deceased geese whose livers he had eaten, than the gallant middy everybody seemed determined on making him out.

The ships had left Newport under sealed orders, not to be opened till midnight. The great mystery was now disclosed: The whole squadron was directed to proceed without delay to Gardiner's Bay. This beautiful little body of water, with its embroidery of pretty islands, seems more like an inland lake than an inlet of the sea. It lies out of the track of commerce, and is singularly free from dangers. With the island of the same name for its eastern shore, it forms, perhaps, the best rendezvous for naval exercises of every sort north of Key West.

Joe's watch proved to be rather an exciting one, but none the less pleasing to him. Every minute or two the light of some vessel, or the flash of

some distant light-house hove in view, keeping him very busy running with messages to the officer of the deck. Once he feared that he had fallen into serious trouble. The Daybreak's main yard became entangled with a schooner's rigging, a considerable portion of which was carried away.

It was not to be wondered at, either, for the schooner's lights were all in, and her captain and crew peacefully sleeping in their bunks. Besides, a heavy mist had fallen, completely shutting her out from Joe's keen sight. As the Daybreak got clear without damage to herself, Joe wished heartily that he could have fired a whole broadside of blank cartridges into the schooner's side to give her a startling and much-needed lesson.

The Sound steamers, on their passage east, now began to close in around them, and in addition to the fog, a hoarse chorus of whistles made it difficult to keep the bearings of each one. Dicky Dawson, who always hung about Joe when they were on watch together, stood with him searching the fog for these great phantoms, the nightly terror of Long Island Sound. Suddenly — almost on the instant — the fog thinned, disclosing one of the largest of the steamers, a huge white shape, off on the port bow. The flood of moonlight which burst upon her as she broke out of the retreating mist caused her to stand out as clearly as at full dawn.

"I begs pardon, sir," said Dicky, "not a wishin' to put in my oar, but that's a strange figger a wanderin' round there on the hurricane deck."

Joe looked sharply. He saw a lady who was either walking in her sleep or else suffering from some mental aberration. She had a weird, wild look; her hair was flying in the breeze raised by the swift motion of the steamer, but an absence of all gestures convinced Joe that it was nothing more than a case of somnambulism. But how could the woman leave her state-room unobserved, he wondered. No one on board the steamer knew of her strange conduct, or was aware of her great peril.

"There she goes!" cried Dicky, the fire leaping to his eyes.

Joe trembled and turned pale, for at that moment the woman stepped over the slight railing surrounding the deck, and deliberately walked or jumped into the sea. As she struck the water a frightened cry went out into the night. Before Joe had recovered himself sufficiently to utter a word, Dawson had plunged over the Daybreak's rail, and was making bold strokes to the rescue. The would-be tragedy was also witnessed by Captain Farradale and Mr. Bloomsbury, who were standing on the bridge. As Joe ran aft, two sharp strokes of the engine-room bell, accompanied by orders to let go a buoy and call away one of the

whale-boats, apprised him that his report was unnecessary. This was followed by a signal to the steamer, which was going on as though nothing had happened, to heave to.

"Bear a hand with that boat," shouted Mr. Bloomsbury, as the boat went down very slowly. "The woman will drown, if you don't look alive."

"Something's jammed, sir," came back in a flustered tone.

Whatever it was Joe's knife quickly mastered, and the boat went down with a run.

"Put her on board the steamer," called Captain Farradale as Joe shoved off.

"Ay, ay, sir," called back our hero.

Joe saw that the steamer had understood the signal, and was backing water as fast as possible. He also discovered three men tugging for dear life to lower a boat, which, as is generally the case at such times, was hermetically sealed, and would not budge from the davits. At the same time he saw Dawson buoying up the woman with great coolness and much skill. Owing to his superior art in aquatics, he was floating with his burden as quietly as though they had been on a life-raft; before sighting the boat he had started to swim off to the Daybreak's buoy, which shone like a beacon not far away. All the time he talked to the lady in his quaint fashion, assuring her that there was not the slightest danger. As the boat

came near, Joe overheard a little of the conversation. "There, mum," said Dawson, "they're arter yer now. Jest keep still when they pulls yer in, an' don't flop round."

"There are sharks here," said the lady in a frightened tone, giving a nervous start, as if one had touched her with his fin.

"No, no, mum; don't you be afeared. There ain't no sharks here. Sharks doesn't like no sich delicit bait as you be. I's been in a whole school on 'em myself, an' they didn't so much as smell o' me."

Dawson spoke so soothingly that his dialect had as good an effect upon the woman's excited nerves as though he had spoken the purest English.

It took but a moment to get him and his fair burden into the boat. The steamer had come to a standstill, and Joe headed immediately for her. While he was making the lady as comfortable as possible with his blouse and a piece of tarpaulin, she managed to tell him that she knew nothing of what had happened until she was awakened by striking the water. She burst into a flood of tears when contemplating the grief of her husband and two little girls, whom she had left sleeping in their state-room, had she not been rescued. Joe tried to comfort her by reminding her of their great joy in having her restored to them. His words had a

soothing effect. As he continued she became less hysterical.

Joe could now see that hundreds of people, in every description of attire, had come upon deck; there was wild confusion everywhere. A glance among the men assured him that they had not neglected to provide themselves with life-preservers. Some of them stood all poised for a leap into the sea; others were prepared to do so if the emergency required. Joe could not make out that any attention worth speaking of had been bestowed upon the women and children by their natural protectors. Evidently they all thought something had happened to the steamer, and they must look out for their own precious lives first. By the time the boat had been brought round under the steamer's guard, order was restored among the passengers. As our hero, with the assistance of the crew, lifted the lady to the steamer's deck, the delighted cries of two little girls and the ecstatic demonstrations of a gentleman greeted him.

In the excitement the boat was forgotten, and Joe was obliged to ask for the return of his blouse. Once again in his uniform he shoved off unnoticed, and was making quick strokes for the Daybreak, But a hail from the captain of the steamer was a signal for him to heave to.

"What vessel does that boat belong to, sir?" he called.

"United States Ship Daybreak, sir," returned Joe.

"And the officer of the boat?" continued the captain.

"Naval Cadet Bently, sir," was the prompt reply.

To his surprise Joe heard a passenger, evidently a young lady, say very distinctly, "Why, mamma, that's Joe Bently that answered the captain."

"Give my compliments to Captain Farradale," said the captain, who seemed to know the commanding officer of the Daybreak, "and thank him for his timely assistance."

"Ay, ay, sir," called Joe, as he once more ordered the men to give way.

The strange voice puzzled Joe. On his way back to the Daybreak two white handkerchiefs continued to flutter. Who could it be, he wondered. The tone did not sound familiar. Could it have been Katie Aston who spoke? Impossible! There was not an accent that reminded him of her. Besides, she was at this time doubtless getting ready for the much talked of cruise in the Celeste. No, think of it as he would, he could get no clue to his mysterious friends on board the steamer.

"Up to your old tricks, I see, Dawson," said Mr. Bloomsbury as the party climbed on board the Daybreak. "Give my compliments to the surgeon,



and ask him to give you a ration of whiskey. A full ration, mind ; you're all of a shiver."

"No fear but I'll ask for a full one, sir," said Dawson, grinning.

"I wish to see you at the mast to-morrow morning at nine o'clock," said Captain Farradale.

"Ay, ay, sir," said Dicky, hurrying below.

When Joe came on deck the next morning, Dawson was the first sailor-man he saw. He stood waiting for him just forward of the mainmast. He looked very happy and was pulling away at his pipe all unconscious of the fact that it had no more fire in it than an extinct volcano. As Joe leaned over the rail to take a look at Gardiner's Bay and its environments, all the vessels meanwhile having come to an anchor, Dawson approached him very respectfully, and told him that Captain Farradale had given him a billet.

"What is it?" asked Joe, greatly pleased.

"Coxswain o' the capen's gig, sir."

"Good enough," he exclaimed; "I knew something was coming." And he grasped Dawson warmly by the hand.

"The luck's never long ag'in old Dicky Dawson, sir; the luck's never long ag'in him. He's like a rubber ball. He squeezes all up in yer hand, but let go on him and he puffs out jest the same as ever. When I seed you a-comin' over the side, sir, I knowed the storm was a clearin' for Dicky

Dawson. When I sees a cloud a-tryin' to pin itself together with a star, I doesn't need no barometer to tell me that good weather's a-comin'."

"You'll be careful, and not forfeit it this time, won't you?" said Joe, quietly.

"I's done with whiskey, sir; that is, leavin' out medicine, when I gits saterated like I was last night," gravely replied Dawson.

Joe had barely ceased congratulating his old friend on his good fortune, when a cadet arrived from the flag-ship with a message for Captain Faradale. The captain happened to be standing near the mast, and the message, which was in truth an order from the admiral, could be heard distinctly all around the deck.

"The admiral sends his compliments, sir," said the cadet, "and desires the Daybreak's battalion to be ready at the shortest possible notice to land with the naval brigade on Gardiner's Island. He wishes also to see Lieutenant Bloomsbury on board the flag-ship without delay."

"Something's in the wind," thought Joe; "he's rushing things so."

Later instructions indicated that the admiral wished to see in how short a time the naval brigade could be landed, fight a sham battle, and go into camp, to remain on shore, possibly one night; then to break camp and return to the several ships.

"It's come, you see, according to prediction,"

said Mr. Bloomsbury, intercepting Joe on his way to the steerage, displaying a highly-pleased manner over the news. "I've suspected it all along. I like expedition, but this is precipitation. However, it's all right. It suits me exactly. In time of war, you know, we'd often get into scrapes that would require as great haste as this. But I'm sorry you'll have so much to see to," he added. "The admiral has appointed me military engineer of the expedition."

"What will I have to do?" asked Joe.

"Get the company ready and superintend the stowing of the boats. I'll be back by the time you're ready to shove off," and Mr. Bloomsbury disappeared over the side in obedience to the admiral's summons. Joe felt rather bewildered.

As soon as he was clear of Mr. Bloomsbury, Mr. Moncrief sent for him, with Swem and Harry, to meet him on the port side of the quarter deck. This would have been very amusing had it not been such a common occurrence. Whenever Schopy was to be lectured on his delinquencies, or to receive special instructions concerning a cadet's duties, all three had to be present. Then Mr. Moncrief never addressed them individually, but collectively; so that at times, as Harry remarked, they could hardly tell whom he was hitting. Joe and Harry had often to argue themselves out of the notion that they were not the real culprits.

Mr. Moncrief's form of address made it much easier for Swem, for which, on the whole, Joe was not sorry. This time, however, he wished to give some instruction as to landing.

For the benefit of our boy readers we will add, if they will take the trouble to look up the meaning of the words in the dictionary, that in laying down their duties, he was much more categorical than didactic.

Joe was greatly in dread lest Mr. Moncrief should appoint him his aid for the expedition, but that position had already fallen to a higher rank than his own, that of Arlington. Just as Mr. Moncrief was about to dismiss them, the order was passed to get ready for the landing. And with a few words of admonition, really meant for Swem, but, according to the custom, distributed impartially among the three, he let them go.

Joe had studied up the subject of landing parties, and had made an inventory of articles necessary to be taken. It now stood him in good stead. His first duty was to improvise several tents, in place of Mr. Bloomsbury, whose work it would have been had he not been called away. At first he was greatly puzzled over the matter, but at last hit upon an ingenious contrivance. Two boat-masts, he thought, would serve as end pieces, while a stunsail-boom would make a good ridge-pole. The end pieces being securely guyed, an

awning or sail could then be spread over the frame-work and hauled out to pegs driven down at regular intervals all around. The leeches of the sail would serve as fastenings, and the work could be completed by closing the ends of the tent with light sails, thus providing quarters good enough for a major-general in the field.

Joe was much pleased with this first success. He next turned his attention to the men's outfit. This gave him less trouble than he expected. He had been careful to see that each man in his division was furnished with leggings, a knife, a change of clothing and two blankets. The extra suit of clothes, blankets, and a bountiful supply of tobacco, all rolled up in a hammock, would constitute each man's personal baggage. Joe was very careful to see that every tobacco ration was far in excess of the most ravenous appetite for its consumption; and he thought what a fortunate circumstance it was that there was no grog to go along. For that ration, to the honor of the Navy, had been abolished. In addition to this baggage, each man would have to carry a pot, pan and spoon, slung to his waist-belt. These, Joe thought, in an enemy's country, where foraging was not over-good, might be regarded as more formidable weapons than any arms that could be carried.

Joe's last and most responsible work was when the order was given to fit out the boats. As Mr.

Bloomsbury could not be present, he had that gentleman's boat to stow as well as his own. The list of articles he had made out now greatly accelerated his work. As they were brought from below and dumped down on the deck, he stood over them memoranda in hand, with the air of a connoisseur. There were compasses and glasses, boxes containing materials and tools for repairs, leads and lines, lanterns and candles; articles enough, apparently, to furnish a cargo for a small schooner. All these were to go in two small boats, together with two tents, a large quantity of provisions, a breech loading rifle and a Gatling gun, to say nothing of the boats' crews, with their baggage and arms. In all probability, Cæsar's galleys did not have a quarter part of the outfit for a passage across the Adriatic Sea.

Joe was surprised when with his own hands he began to stow the boats, to see how quickly things got hidden away; and when the last of the paraphernalia was in place, he regarded his work with great satisfaction. It was with no little pride that he ran up the gangway and reported to Mr. Moncrief that the boats were ready for service.

He had just time to go below and get on his leggings and side-arms, which consisted of a sword and revolver, with a cartridge box, when a call was made for the flotilla to form.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE NAVAL BRIGADE.

WHEN Joe came on deck amusing sights awaited him. Indeed, it would have taken a more dignified cadet than he prided himself on being, not to have been amused at what he saw. Hubbins, who was serving as quarter-master's assistant, stood in front of the cooks, mess-cooks and servants, trying to conceal his wrath. An insult had been offered him, so he believed. He had just returned from transporting a barrel of cooked pork, a barrel of bean soup, with bread and coffee sufficient for one meal, to Gardiner's Island, and was about to re-embark at the head of a squad, bearing scouse-kettles, coffee pots, buckets, division tubs and other impedimenta. He, who might have been an admiral by this time, having to do all this! "Why," he reflected, "I might have been in command of this very expedition." He could hardly have looked more forlorn had he been a Russian exile banished to Siberia for a too ardent espousal of Nihilism.

Coverly, who feared that he might encounter

marshy places in his advances and retreats on the island—at least, this was his explanation—had borrowed a pair of the chief engineer's boots. The boots were altogether too large for his feet. He looked as if he might have been let down into them as some light object is let down into a big boat. Joe more than half suspected Coverly's innocence in the affair. A slight twitching about the corners of his mouth, as well as other signs, went to prove that the boots had not been adopted altogether for the purpose of self-protection. Joe wondered that the captain of marines, or Mr. Moncrief, both of whom looked very sharply at Coverly's feet, did not order him below to put on shoes and leggings; but with his accustomed happy fortune he escaped this retribution.

Finally there was Schopy. He was strapped up alongside the surgeon's sword, the new one voted by the committee not having arrived before the Daybreak sailed. Swem looked very sheepish as he advanced along the deck, the elongated hilt nearly on a line with his ear. But as it was quite certain that there would be no weapons drawn before leaving the Daybreak, he began to take courage. Had occasion required, he would not have been able to get this sword from its scabbard without tipping that receptacle so nearly perpendicular as to empty it out, thus making a most ludicrous and unmilitary spectacle.



The plan fixed upon was to send the marines from the different ships on in advance to hold the island. They were to oppose the landing of the blue-jackets, and, being the inferior force, were finally to succumb ; but not until after a hot contest, in which as many details of a battle as possible were to be carried out. It was to be a sham battle of no inconsiderable proportions.

The vessels had now all signalled the flag-ship that their forces were ready for landing, and the order was given to embark. Mr. Moncrief directed the departure of the Daybreak's battalion from her deck. The perfect order in which all was done at such short notice was a matter of surprise and delight to Joe. Everybody seemed familiar with the battalion station bill, which had been hung up in different places around the ship. Even Enoch Long, who was generally credited with being the most awkward and unenlightened member of the crew, acquitted himself with honor.

Joe could hardly make himself believe that they were not setting forth on an actual campaign, and that bloody battles would not ensue. Harry was in quite an exalted state. As he marched his company along that part of the line where Joe stood, he whispered, "This means blood," and for the instant, Joe almost wished it did. Presently the whole battalion was afloat, and the flotilla proceeded to form for the admiral's inspection.

Joe had never before witnessed such an assemblage of boats. From the stern of the cutter he could see a number of schooners anchored not far away, waiting for a fair wind. On many of them were the families of the captains. These all seemed at a loss to know what to make of the display. Their double-shotted glasses were brought to bear on the boats as if suspecting them of being about to raise the black flag, and they were debating whether it was not best to up anchor and away. But in a moment, according to naval tactics, the divisions of boats were formed. Skirmishers, pioneers, infantry, artillery, supply squad and ambulance corps, each component of the brigade, fell into its respective station as though this formation had been an every-day occurrence.

Joe looked around carefully. He was anxious to understand the arrangement of the different parts of the brigade.

The skirmishers, he noticed, were in advance, the infantry at the centre, and most of the artillery on the flanks. The captain of the flag-ship was in command of the expedition. He was at a distant point overlooking the flotilla from the steam cutter. This craft was regarded by everybody as a sort of imperial barge, whose slightest movement fastened all eyes upon her. In the rear were several swift-pulling boats, flying the hospital flag, and containing surgeons, apothecaries and stretcher-

men. Each boat in the several lines had its number painted in large figures upon two separate pieces of canvas, which were hung out one over the bow and the other over the stern.

The Daybreak's division of boats was rendered quite conspicuous by carrying a huge Jack. The name of the ship was painted in the centre of this in large bright letters. Joe and Harry happened to be in the same boat. They were amused to see Schopy's sword hanging far out over the stern of the Lady Godiva, to whose command he had been purposely assigned by Mr. Moncrief. His revolver also stuck so far out of his belt that, together with his huge sword, he assumed an uncommonly threatening appearance. The Lady Godiva happened to be the next boat to the cutter Joe and Harry were in. Even a whisper was perfectly audible to everybody in the two boats.

"Say, Schopy," said Harry, "don't go rummaging around the island with that sword."

"Why?" innocently asked Swem.

"Because they'll shoot you for a pirate."

But all bantering was presently lost in the cadets' admiration of the flotilla. It made a very fine spectacle on the sparkling waters of the bay; the national colors fluttering from each boat, each piece of ordnance, and every rifle, bayonet and cutlass furbished to the brightness of Sheffield steel.

"This wouldn't be a bad showing," remarked Joe, "if we were going to plant the flag on Madagascar or up the Congo."

"I only wish we were on such an expedition," rejoined Harry, the fire leaping to his eyes at the bare suggestion. "But we'll never see anything but sham fighting in our Navy," he added in disgust.

"Don't be so sure," said Joe, smiling at Harry's disappointed look. "Wars, you know, are not cut and dried like great land speculations, though they resemble them somewhat when they get going. Nations get mad and pitch into one another just like individuals."

"I hope some nation will get mad, then — very soon, and pitch into us," rejoined Harry. "A first-class war would do this country good."

"Some nation will pitch into us," said Joe, after the manner of a young oracle.

This warlike conversation took place while the brigade, which was now afloat, was awaiting the admiral's inspection. In a few minutes the admiral appeared on the bridge of the flag-ship. Barely raking the flotilla with the twin guns of a field-glass, he ordered a signal run up for it to get under way. Slowly, but in perfect formation, the boats moved forward. The landing was to be stoutly opposed by the marines, who had been sent on in advance. As the flotilla approached the beach, an order was given for all the boats

carrying machine guns and howitzers to pull to either flank. They could thus, if necessary, pour a galling cross-fire upon the enemy. Mr. Bloomsbury afterwards told Joe that he had never witnessed such a splendid advance, excepting in one instance at Key West, when the largest force was put ashore ever landed by the Navy.

"How much ammunition have we?" inquired Harry, as he caught sight of the marines ashore getting ready to repel the invaders.

"Enough for a bloodier affray than this will be," laughed Joe.

"But how much have we?" persisted Harry, his eyes dilating at the prospect.

"Well," said Joe, "there are a thousand rounds packed in the feed cases of the Gatlings, the caisson boxes of the howitzers are stuffed full, each man carries twenty rounds in his cartridge belt, and the supply squads hold no end of it in reserve. I think the country's safe."

But Harry was only half listening. Joe knew by the flash of his eyes that he was burning to catch the gleam of twenty thousand bayonets along the shore.

"It's coming now," exclaimed Joe, almost as much excited for the moment as his companion, as an order was given for the skirmishers and artillerists to clear the beach.

A loud volley from the shore (of blank car-

tridges) showed that whatever might be the outcome the marines were determined to open the fight, and to their utmost resist the landing.

Harry clapped his hands. Joe felt impelled to pitch the young rebel overboard for thus applauding the enemy.

But now the boats opened fire. This mimicry of actual battle seemed glorious to Joe. The fierce detonation of the howitzers, the crack of the Gatlings, louder than the snap of a thousand watchman's rattles whirled by as many giants, the steady crash of the musketry, were music to him. He wouldn't mind spending an hour or two every day in such a battle as this. His tune changed, however, when a bullet, which by mistake had got in among the blank cartridges, came whizzing over the boat.

"Hooray!" exclaimed Harry, jumping up in the boat. "I like that!"

"I don't," returned Joe, considerably disturbed; "it puts a different complexion on the affair. If there are any more like that, I think we'd better lie down in the boats till they're expended."

"There they go again!" cried Harry, as one—two—three more sang over their heads. "Schoopy, old boy, mind your eye; it's the sharpshooters trying to pick off the officers."

It did begin to look somewhat serious. Joe had half a mind to pull out to Mr. Moncrief's boat and

tell him that the marines were firing bullets by mistake. Hearing no more, however, he wisely decided not to leave the line. Steadily the boats moved on, and steadily the powder blazed in the very faces of the enemy. The enemy's fire was quick and regular, but it was no match for that which belched from the guns in the boats; and soon a rift in the smoke, as the boats were quite close in shore, showed that the marines were falling back under cover of any natural barrier they could find.

"Wouldn't I like to go for them now?" almost shouted Harry. He stood up in the boat waiting the order to land his company, impatient as the celebrated war horse of which we read in the Book of Job. And when in a moment the order came for him to land, he jumped for the beach in advance of his men. In his impetuosity he leaped a little too soon, and down he went in a deep place, head over ears in the water. Nothing could be seen for an instant but his cap. He presently appeared at the surface, however, and a couple of strokes bringing him to a shallow place, he rushed up out of the water as if he fancied himself leading a charge with his uniform riddled with bullets.

"Get that howitzer ashore immediately," called Mr. Moncrief from the beach to Swem, who had the piece referred to in charge.

"Ay, ay, sir," answered Swem, going briskly at

it, his sword hilt waving back and forth like an odd kind of plume.

But the howitzer seemed determined not to be landed. It began to flounder around in the boat. Under its strange antics, the Lady Godiva felt as ticklish as a tight-rope, and in spite of everything, Swem feared she would turn turtle. But in a moment, getting one wheel of the carriage over the side, the gun jumped the boat, and turning a complete somersault, landed on the rocky bottom a fathom down. Poor Swem looked over at the howitzer about as a country boy would regard a horse that by some strange mishap had rolled into a ditch on his back.

"What's the matter in that boat?" sung out Mr. Moncrief, emerging from a cloud of smoke at the water's edge.

"The howitzer has gone overboard, sir," said Swem in a trembling voice.

"If that gun isn't in position in five minutes, I'll know the reason why," concluded Mr. Moncrief in no very mild tones; and he disappeared as quickly as he had come into view.

"Never mind, Schopy," said Joe, who had witnessed the affair while waiting for an order to land his company; "I'll lend you a hand."

Putting their heads together, the cadets very shortly had the howitzer up and in position on the right flank, where, Swem observed, it would be



about as useful for purposes of battle as a wet swab.

With the whole brigade now on shore, the tempest of battle rose to its fullest height. From behind every variety of natural breastwork the marines poured forth an unceasing fire. Sharpshooters, hidden among the foliage of the trees, were no less active. There were charges and counter-charges, advances and retreats. Harry, by a daring assault, carried two of the enemy's strongest positions. Coverly, in retaliation, captured Schopy's howitzer. Joe gallantly recovered it, taking prisoners Coverly and his whole detachment of marines. Schopy got excited and plunged into the thickest of the fight. The stretcher-men wanted somebody to carry from the field, and he ordered Enoch Long, who was pumping the blank cartridges from his magazine rifle as though he imagined himself out shooting squirrels, to fall down wounded.

"I won't," said Long, still peppering away.

Swem raised his awful sword over Long's head, who, at the sight of it, pitched forward on the grass as though he had been a kind of cartridge fired from the heel of a stage horse.

"I'll report you to the cap'n," he sung out, as the stretcher-men tumbled him into a stretcher and bore him from the field.

An officer had to be killed, and it fell to Joe to

foot up this column of casualties. He was carried from the field, however, more tenderly than Long had been.

The enemy's shots now came very irregularly and at long range. It was very evident that the marines were beating a hasty retreat. Advance guards, rear guards and flankers were thrown out, and a careful reconnoissance revealed the fact that the brigade had taken the island. But it is one thing to take an island and another to hold it. Now everybody worked to make sure the victory. Fortifications were thrown up in no time, rifle pits dug, batteries planted, sentinels posted, and picket lines established. In the short space of an hour, they could have repelled a cavalry raid, and sheltered themselves from any number of skirmishers and sharp-shooters who might be hidden behind the rocks and among the foliage of the trees.

"I want my dinner, now, Mr. Alexander the Great," said Coverly, flinging himself on the grass, boots high in the air.

The battle over, Joe was superintending the erection of the Daybreak's tents, and greatly to their amusement was keeping up the illusion that Coverly was still his prisoner.

"Seems to me you're rather familiar for a prisoner of war," laughed Joe. "I'll clap you in the guard-house if you don't look out."

Joe was very hungry himself, and was hurrying to get through with his work before the dinner-call should sound. The smoke of Hubbins' kitchens was now more glorious to him than the smoke of battle had been. His section in the village of tents, therefore, grew very quickly. His ingenuity was considerably taxed to get sails and awnings to fit on to the frame works. Wrinkles, bulges and ridges would mysteriously appear in the canvas, but he rubbed and hammered and stretched, till at last he attained comparative smoothness. He was not able to get the sides of the tents very taut, and he hoped for the sake of his reputation as a tent builder, there would be no rain while they were in camp. The work was completed by digging a trench around each structure.

"Where are the bees?" asked Coverly, surveying the tents with a comical air.

"What do you mean?" asked Joe.

Coverly intimated that they would make excellent bee-hives. He also suggested that in form they resembled one another about as nearly as the oddest varieties of birds' nests, and that there was about breathing space enough in each of them for a fairy. "But how in the world are we all going to sleep in them?" he concluded.

"Oh! we shall have to arrange ourselves geometrically," laughed Joe, "like heaps of cannon balls."

The glory of war does not appease natural appe-

tite, unless the thirst for glory be regarded as such, and we must show no signs of surprise as we now behold Joe and Coverly almost scampering across the field of Mars after their dinner. The clatter of pots, pans and spoons, louder, it may be, than the din of battle had been, suddenly arrested their conversation with the most inspiring strains of deck or camp, and set them beating irregular but quick time over the turf. In another moment they flung themselves down before a grassy table beside their messmates, who, in their coming, had been no less eager than themselves, all prepared for the heaviest charge of the day.

"This everlasting serving out of pork and beans," exclaimed Hubbins, coming up from the kitchen with a very red face, "is" —

"Important, but not intellectual," said Harry, filling in a sentence for him.

"This commanding a company is intellectual, but not important," retorted Hubbins.

"Oh! give us our beans, Hubbins," called Coverly; "we're starving."

The beans and coffee, piping hot, were brought up by the steerage servants, and Mr. Hubbins was highly complimented on his talents as a restaurateur, which, however, he did not at all relish. He said that he had no use for commendation that belonged to a cook. Joe made some sober re-

mark or other, when Hubbins told him that he would be much obliged if he would forego preaching for once. It was evident that Hubbins did not take the slightest interest in executing the duties of his office, on this occasion, at least.

"Hooray, isn't this jolly!" exclaimed Harry, finishing his beans, and tumbling back on the grass like a ten-inch shell.

"I wish it would last a week," said Joe, rolling over and over on the green-sward like a small boy.

"There'll be fun in camp to-night," observed Coverly with a knowing look; "we've got it all arranged."

"More graveyard business, I suppose," said Hubbins gruffly. "I'd vary the programme occasionally, if I were you."

"Coverly's got his burglar's tools along," said Harry. "I saw him packing them up."

"And his dulcimer — zithern, I mean," said Schopy.

"Yes; and he'll be playing it half the night. I'm sick of its infernal buzz," put in Hubbins.

"I'll tell you what's up," said Coverly, "if you'll promise not to blow on me."

"Go on; we won't," said every one but Hubbins.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed somebody in rear of them, who had come up unobserved.

All quickly turned on their elbows and saw

Lieutenant Bloomsbury looking down upon them with a most ludicrous expression of countenance.

“Sorry your little game’s blocked,” he said. “I was a midshipman once, myself. But have you noticed anything peculiar on the flag-ship?”

All looked and saw a tiny speck of bunting fluttering at her main.

“The dickens!” exclaimed Coverly, jumping to his feet and taking a look at it through his glass; “that’s the general recall.”

## CHAPTER XIII.

### JOE AND LIEUTENANT BLOOMSBURY.

ANOTHER of the admiral's little surprises," chuckled Mr. Bloomsbury, coming hastily up to where our hero was busy in the demolition of the tents. "But you won't regret it. Dine with me this evening in the wardroom; I'll tell you all about it," and he hurried on.

But Joe did regret it. This peremptory summons back to the ship was not agreeable to all the young officers. They had counted on several days in camp and had planned no end of sport. Then there was associated with it a feeling somewhat akin to ignominy. It was as if a battalion of recruits had been sent home after a single day's campaigning. What could it all mean? For a few moments Joe was conscious of a keen sense of disappointment. To be sure, he was an ardent lover of the sea, but his affection for the green earth was stronger just now. The mystery and grandeur of the ocean moved him to wondrous feelings; but what were these compared with the fresh, delightful emotions awakened by the touch

of mother earth? With one strong effort, however, he cast these fancies from his mind, and turned to his work with the earnestness which ever characterized his movements.

In time of peace the Navy is necessarily a school of war. Only by assuming a state of warfare, and enjoying its operations and manœuvres, can officers and men be kept in training to defend the country and the flag in case of insult or invasion. The quick eye, the steady nerves, the prompt, clear judgment so essential in battle, must be acquired by assuming, so far as is practicable, the conditions and exigencies of war.

So, in view of the absence of hostilities, the admiral had recourse to a war of home manufacture. As we have already seen, his plans suddenly changed with reference to the encampment, and the brigade was immediately ordered back for the grander operations in contemplation. The cadets all said it was going off half-cocked; but when Joe understood it he asked them if in history they knew of a single war or battle which in the beginning had not gone off in just that way.

That evening Joe dined with Mr. Bloomsbury. Important events were pending. Mr. Bloomsbury wished to talk with him concerning them, as well as to enjoy the pleasure of his company at dinner. Lieutenant Bloomsbury's friendship for Joe was very ardent. It had been strengthening day by



day ever since their acquaintance began. Indeed it is safe to say that Joe Bently was the most popular young officer on board the Daybreak. He was not aware of this fact, but his respectful bearing toward his superiors, his quiet, unassuming manner, his consideration for the men, as well as his ready adaptation to any kind of service, not to mention his well-known courage, excited a deep interest in him, and won him many friends both before and abaft the mast. But too much time must not be spent in sounding Joe's praises; to accord him his honest due is simply justice.

The feelings quite likely to be cherished by the resident of an inconsequential street toward a fine house on a fashionable avenue, which at some future time he hoped to occupy, may represent Joe's condition of mind as he entered the ward-room. This apartment, shut in from the air and the sunshine, abounding with inconveniences, a kind of gaudy, stuffy basement, was, notwithstanding, a paradise to our young cadet. To be sure, he regarded it as a sort of cave, but when the Aladdin's lamp of promotion should be bestowed upon him, what untold riches of honor and preferment it would then disclose! And as for its discomforts, he would care no more for them then, than a man would care of what material the strong bag was made that contains his gold. Joe, we must remember, is only a cadet and just now the

wardroom is his brightest dream of youth. What matter if much of it is illusion? We doubt not that a king has often laughed over the hallucinations that filled his princely visions of a throne.

It was rather a dampener to Joe's brilliant fancies that at the instant he crossed the wardroom threshold he was confronted by an officer who could not sympathize with them in the least. Immediately this officer had shaken hands with Joe, he began to draw a dark picture of wardroom life. It was a kind of martyrdom, he hinted, to be shut up in a place that in some aspects resembled the street of tombs in Pompeii, and in others the catacombs of Rome. "To me," he continued, "the Navy is a servitude, not a service."

Joe ventured to remark that he hoped it was not so bad as all that.

"Yes," said the officer, and sweeping the wardroom with one glance of his eye; "you see what you're coming to as a lieutenant"

Joe recalled several visitations that might be harder to endure.

"Professionally," he went on, "you are in a cartilaginous state. Take my advice, and go into some other profession before you ossify in your present one."

At this Joe looked bored. "I hope they don't all feel this way," he mentally said.

He wished some one would relieve him from

this dissertation of his dismal custodian ; and this wish was soon granted, for several gentlemen who had been smiling over his initiation came to the rescue. Their cheerful conversation at once dispelled the unpleasant impression he might otherwise have received. The wardroom seemed quite as glorious as ever. He saw that the general disposition was to get the best things out of wardroom life ; and he was much pleased with the spirit of jolly fraternity which characterized the greater number of the mess.

Everybody seemed to unbend. Mr. Moncrief appeared, as respected his attitude toward our hero, to have left all his official dignity on deck. Indeed, he had quite charmed Joe by assuming such a thoroughly unofficial manner. He forgave him the endless tasks he had assigned him. As for Mr. Bloomsbury, Joe had seldom seen him when he did not overflow with good nature ; but in the wardroom he reminded him of something that would enjoy bursting if by that means he could distribute any greater pleasure.

One thing, however, suggested a rather disagreeable subject to his mind. He saw that most of the wardroom officers were approaching middle life ; the time when, in his opinion, they should be nearing the top of their profession in rank and responsibility. They never could be better qualified for its higher duties, he thought ; yet here

they were not half-way up the ladder. Joe gave a little gasp as he thought of the many long years, should things remain unchanged in the Navy, before his hand could ever touch the round in the ladder of promotion which most of these officers had already grasped. But he hoped that meanwhile Congress would shorten the ladder, so that before his hair should have turned white, and his ambition waned, the top round might be within reaching distance. At any rate, as he used to express it to himself, he would like for Congress to give him as fair a show as was given young men in other professions.

But at this point his reflections were cut short by the announcement of dinner. At table he sat at Mr. Bloomsbury's right, his old habit of silence dominating. It being the first time he had dined in a wardroom, he regarded it as something of an event. Of course his eyes were made to do service. He was much pleased with the table, not in an agricultural, but in an artistic sense. It was tastefully decorated with flowers, and was screened off at either end by pieces of bright bunting. The showy uniforms of the officers on either side added to its picturesqueness.

In a moment, however, these slight externals were banished from his mind by the mess-table talk. It had already gathered itself into a swift stream of comments, observations, questions, and so forth,

broken into occasional rapids by an outburst of fun.

"For spontaneous, effusive, vociferous talk," said Mr. Bloomsbury, turning to him with a smile, "give me a wardroom mess."

After awhile the conversation took a serious turn, and but for a flash in the pan it would have been without incident for some little time. Mr. Bloomsbury happened to make the remark that the idlers on board ship could not appreciate the hardship of being in three watches. A gentleman who was not a watch officer took exception to the term idlers.

"I don't stand any watch," said he, "but I'm no idler."

Mr. Bloomsbury laughed heartily.

"Why," said he, "don't you know what an idler is in the Navy? Captain Farradale is an idler. So are Moncrief and the admiral. It distinguishes those on board ship who stand watch from those who do not. Ha, ha, ha!" and away went the last vestige of offense before the inundation of Mr. Bloomsbury's good nature.

The subject of ancestry was broached. One officer remarked that his great-grandfathers were colonels in the Revolutionary War. Another said his were tories at that period; and he furthermore stated that he had a very old uncle living in Newport, who now claimed to be a tory and gloried in

it. In a moment of weakness the youngest officer in the mess made some personal allusion in connection with Beacon Hill. The chief engineer at once asked him what year his ancestors landed at Castle Garden.

And so a running fire of questions, comments, anecdotes and so on was kept up, which presently wound up with a rather startling pantomimic display. In bringing on the *omlette au rhum*, the colored servant lighted the spirits which covered it in the rear of Joe's chair. As Joe turned to help himself from the dish—which, by the way, he did not do, being fonder of his native State than of *omlette au rhum*—the flames flared up around the ebony face, exhibiting it in a frame of fire.

“Don't be frightened, don't be frightened,” laughed Mr. Bloomsbury, “he isn't after you. He belongs to this world.”

Joe hoped he might never behold a more vivid reminder of another.

Dinner over, Joe was anxious to talk about the grand operations which Mr. Bloomsbury had intimated were soon coming off. He also feared that the war-game, which with good reason the cadets all dreaded, might be forthcoming. For a number of days, in the intervals of relief from duty, the cadets severally had been invited to participate in this war-game, and it had become their

detestation. Swem had been heard to use some very strong language. The ground for this aversion was that it took time which should be given to their studies, and always resulted in their defeat. As the representative of a ship, Joe had been alternately overhauled, rammed, riddled with ten-inch shell, had his scuppers spouting blood, and not infrequently had been blown out of water by a torpedo. It had always been his fate to be either sunk, burned or captured. The strange thing about it all was, that his opponent generally regarded him as only something to be rammed or fired into; and he would say to himself, "Wonder if he thinks that in actual battle I would behave so much like a derelict or a whale?"

But to his great relief, before there was time to bring on the war-game, Mr. Bloomsbury invited him to his state-room. Mr. Bloomsbury's room was a place of rare interest to Joe, and it was always a pleasure to him to visit it. It was highly characteristic of its occupant. The most difficult thing for Joe to do was to imagine that it was habitable quarters. It had points in common with a workshop, an office, a museum, a bazaar, or the like; it contained no end of bric-à-brac; and of ships, guns, projectiles, torpedoes and torpedo boats, it had models enough, Joe thought, to start a new navy. It was doubtful whether Marco Polo ever saw anything odder than some of its

collections gathered from everywhere under the sun. It was also littered with maps, drawings, diagrams, and scientific works, scattered around in endless confusion.

"Come right in, come right in," said Mr. Bloomsbury, as Joe tripped over a dumb-bell, and caught his shoulder knot on the point of a steel shaving, a recent turning from the jacket of a new gun.

"Thank you, sir," said Joe, bringing up violently against the bunk.

"It's a little crowded," remarked Mr. Bloomsbury. "I like to have a good many things around me. It keeps me occupied."

"In a gale of wind," Joe ventured to observe.

"Yes," laughed Mr. Bloomsbury; "things are a little lively then. But I don't mind it. I've been buried a number of times in my bunk, but they've dug me out in the morning all right. Ha, ha, ha! Before we get to work," he continued, meanwhile twisting his arms like a corkscrew to get them in place, "I want you to look at these."

He handed Joe the photographs of his three children, with a look which plainly said, "Did you ever see anything like them in all your born days?"

"They're beautiful children," said Joe warmly; "what are their names?"

"This one," said Mr. Bloomsbury, pointing to a sturdy little urchin of six, "we call the 'Her-



cules', this one the 'Ajax', and this one" — and here he gazed very tenderly at the picture of a sweet little girl — "the 'Superb'."

"Why, they're the names of English ships," observed Joe, surprised at the strange appellations for children.

"Oh! of course they're not their real names," replied Mr. Bloomsbury, smiling. "They're recorded as George, Howard and Ethel. But it's hard to leave such children as those," and here his voice became very husky, and he dashed a tear from his eye. "That's what makes a ship a jail, and a cruise an exile," he added.

Joe had never seen Mr. Bloomsbury display so much feeling before, and he was at a loss to know what to do or say.

"People think," he went on, "that the Navy is a yachting fleet, and a cruise a yachting expedition. The separations it imposes, to say nothing of other deprivations, are intolerable."

Joe looked at this man, to whom he had attributed such a love for the Navy, in astonishment.

"It's only because I'm afraid to take the leap," he added, "that I stay in the Navy. I'm fond enough of the profession, but it's no compensation in any way for the life we have to lead. But it won't do, it won't do; where's the neutralizer?"

The old smile returned as he reached up and took from its hanging place on the bulk-head an

oil painting. Joe had already been regarding it with no little curiosity and amusement. "What do you think of that?" resumed his friend. "An honest opinion, mind."

"Oh! I'm no connoisseur," said our hero, grinning in spite of himself, and wondering if Mr. Bloomsbury were a dabbler in colors.

He saw that the painting essayed to set forth the parable of the Good Samaritan. He thought it strange that the donkey in the picture should be larger than the hill it pretended to stand under; that the Good Samaritan shouldn't have any knees, and that by reaching an arms-length he could have hung his cloak or mantle on a pinnacle of the Synagogue, soaring with heightened color from the midst of Jericho in the distance. There were other shortcomings, or foreshortenings, which, together with the inadvertencies mentioned, made it difficult for Joe to give an honest opinion, thrust as he was so suddenly into art criticism.

"It's a very odd name," he managed to get off, while he spelt out *The Neutralizer*, written, evidently by Mr. Bloomsbury's own hand, in large letters at the bottom.

"Oh! I didn't paint it," he said, amused at Joe's reticence. "It's a magnificent counteractive. When I get a little blue it always starts a fresh breeze in my mind."

"I should think it would start a howling gale,"

remarked Joe, daring to express an opinion now that he had learned that Mr. Bloomsbury was not its author.

"We have to practice all sorts of little deceits and devices upon ourselves to keep cheered up in this life we are living," continued Mr. Bloomsbury, while he proceeded to improvise a desk on the side of his bunk. "But now we'll attend to business," he concluded, taking a handful of papers from his bureau and placing them before him.

When the admiral had sent for him, it was for the purpose of committing to him certain details in the preparations for the exercises in Gardiner's Bay, and he was spending every moment he could get in working out his plans.

"You see," said he, coming to the point at once, "there's going to be a big time. I gave you a hint of it on the island. You and I will work together in a good deal of it. So I thought I'd let you into the secret this evening."

To Joe's delight he then went over the whole ground of the impending operations with him. So absorbed did they become in the work that midnight found them still at it. "You may go now," said Mr. Bloomsbury as he counted the eight bells then striking, indicating the lateness of the hour. "But," he added, as Joe left the room, "put your best work on torpedoes, for a grand battle with torpedoes will undoubtedly wind up the affair."

## CHAPTER XIV.

### FIXING A TORPEDO.

TO follow Joe in every detail of his duties for the next few days would be impossible. A couple of days were spent in getting ready, then the battle exercises began in earnest. A certain portion of Gardiner's Bay was first set off as a harbor. For its protection a series of booms was constructed, consisting of spars, yards and steel hawsers firmly lashed together. Mr. Bloomsbury and Joe had charge of this work. In addition to this, torpedoes were planted, mines laid, and batteries erected on the adjacent shores. This preparation, it was thought, together with a flotilla formed of a dozen or more torpedo boats, would render the harbor impregnable.

The Daybreak and one other ship, for the time being, were to occupy and hold the harbor. The rest of the squadron, regarded as a powerful enemy, was to cruise off the entrances to the bay, establishing a complete blockade. Occasionally a division of ships from the blockading fleet was to dash into the bay, attempt to destroy the Daybreak

and her consort, and thus get possession of the harbor. This was to be done by strategy, the supreme method of modern warfare, rather than by open battle.

At last the arrangements were all completed, and the operations began. For two days and nights there was scarcely any cessation of hostilities. There was a grand roar of artillery and machine guns from morning until night. The inside of the ships were as black from powder as the faces of the artillerists. Attempt after attempt was made to capture the harbor, and on the part of the Daybreak and her consort to break the blockade and run into the open sound. Nothing but failure, however, seemed to attend each movement on either side. In every way possible the torpedo boats tried to get near enough to the blockading squadron to fix torpedoes, but in each instance they were detected, and driven ignominiously back. Captain Farradale was mortified, and Joe thought Mr. Moncrief and Mr. Bloomsbury were almost in a state of rage. The Daybreak had done well with everything but her torpedo boats; and the boat of which Joe had charge had done worst of all. It had partially redeemed itself, however, by stealing up to a point quite near the flagship before it was discovered. Captain Farradale had been anxious to do good work with torpedoes. Torpedo warfare was a

branch of the Service in which he was greatly interested, and in which he believed great possibilities lay. He saw that there must be a change of base, and he quickly decided on a daring enterprise. "To-night," he said to Mr. Moncrief, "young Bently's boat must make a single and final attempt to fire a torpedo under the stern of the flag-ship. Do you think it safe to send Bently?"

"Yes; I think so, sir. He's lacking only in experience. He has no end of nerve and daring."

"I think we've had a pretty good demonstration of that," the captain remarked as he touched the bell for the orderly. "Tell Mr. Bently I wish to see him in the cabin," he said, when that functionary appeared.

Wondering what could be in the wind, Joe presented himself in the cabin.

"I have important and dangerous service for you to-night, if you wish to undertake it," said Captain Farradale, coming to the point at once. "If you do not care to run the risk, I will send Mr. Arlington."

Joe felt like biting his lip to think that the captain should have put it in that way, but he replied promptly that he was not afraid of taking risks.

"Our torpedo boats have not done very well," the captain continued, "and I do not wish to report them a dead failure. If you can fix a torpedo

under the stern of the flag-ship, you'll save the whole thing."

"I can make the trial, sir," replied our hero, with a poor attempt at concealing his pleasure over the honor the captain had conferred upon him.

"You'd better take Mr. Swem along with you," said the captain as, after further instructions, Joe turned to leave the cabin.

"I beg pardon, sir," said Joe with hesitation, "would you mind substituting Mr. Edgerton for Mr. Swem?"

"Certainly not, if Mr. Moncrief thinks he can be spared."

Mr. Moncrief thought he could be spared, and our hero quickly left the cabin to complete his preparations for the expedition. Informing Harry of all that had taken place, they at once set to work with enthusiasm to get everything in readiness by dark.

The boat they were to use was very old, and gave Captain Farradale no little concern. She was a steam cutter, not very sea-worthy, as many thought, with patched boilers and machinery liable to break down under any unusual strain. She was also a clumsy craft, of small freeboard, and without air chambers. For rolling she had the capacity of a mule, only she had never exercised it to its full extent and gone entirely over. She had to

be handled with extreme caution in a sea-way ; otherwise she would have undoubtedly gone to the bottom more quickly than ever the *Lady Godiva* had accomplished that feat. As Captain Farradale hinted, there were many risks connected with the expedition. In addition to the comparative unseaworthiness of the boat it may be noted that the danger was also greatly enhanced by the springing up of a fresh breeze — indeed, a moderate gale, and the prospect of a very dark night.

It took some little time to prepare the boat. By the advice of Harry, a turtle-back deck was rigged over the bow-sheets. This was done by covering a light frame-work with canvas, the bottom of which was solidly nailed all around to the boat. Several fathoms more chain were added to the anchor, a large quantity of kindling wood was stowed snugly in the locker, to be used in relighting fires in case the sea should put them out, and any number of tools were placed on board to repair any accident that might happen to the machinery. A supply of water and provisions, life-preservers, buckets for bailing out, and an apparatus for the more expeditious handling of torpedoes — an invention of Joe's own brain — completed the outfit.

In addition to this thorough preparation there was a picked crew. The moment the nature of the expedition was suspected, Joe was overwhelmed



with applications from men and boys anxious to go with him. Enoch Long was foremost among the applicants, and dwelt in his peculiar style on his fitness for the service; but Joe felt that he could be spared without subsequent regrets. It did, however, go against the grain to be obliged to turn away from so many others; lusty young fellows as they were, who would have rejoiced to go with him into any kind of danger. He heartily wished that he might accommodate them with something in the way of real warfare, of proportions worthy of their bravery.

We may be sure that under these circumstances his crew was very carefully selected, and that first among them were Connors and Dicky Dawson. He selected Dawson as coxswain, and Connors to handle the torpedo. When the boat's crew was mustered, it was found to number, exclusive of Joe and Harry, eight people — "force enough," Joe remarked, "if well handled on torpedo expeditions, to seriously damage, if not totally destroy, an enemy."

Everything in readiness, the cadets waited in utmost impatience the arrival of ten o'clock, the hour fixed by Captain Farradale for their departure. They feared the captain might change his mind at the last minute. Every ring of the cabin bell now fairly set them in a tremor. The weather was very threatening. The sky was full of nimbus

clouds ; the wind came in puffs and squalls, and was steadily increasing in force. The captain had finally come out upon the quarter deck, and was evidently in an anxious, doubtful frame of mind. He called to his orderly, asking how the barometer stood. Fortunately for the cadets, it was reported steady. But at last, just as they had begun to think the project would be abandoned, they were rejoiced to hear the captain say to the officer of the deck, "Let the boat shove off promptly, sir, at four bells."

The sharp closing of the cabin door a moment later indicated that the captain had returned to his quarters, and our young belligerents started quickly for the deck. They had been sagacious enough to keep out of the captain's way during the evening, realizing that if they remained out of sight the captain would not be so much impressed by their youth and inexperience.

Ten o'clock came, and the order was given to shove off. In accordance with naval usage, Joe was now commanding officer of the boat. He gave Dawson the course he was to steer by the compass, having previously ascertained the bearing of the flag-ship. The boat, of course, carried no running lights, and as soon as they started the additional precaution was taken of pulling a canvas cover over the two or three lanterns on board. Joe also gave orders that in firing up, the

furnace door must be kept open as short a time as possible. With a few other preliminary directions and precautions, the boat moved slowly out into the darkness, which was now of inky blackness.

"This is glorious," cried Harry, as a shower of spray flew over the canvas covering of the launch. "Only it's a sham," he added, his voice relapsing almost into a tone of melancholy.

"It won't be a sham getting there," ejaculated Joe, as a big sea struck the launch on the port quarter, flinging both cadets against the bulk-head, and flooding the stern-sheets with a foot of water.

"You'll have to jump her along, to keep ahead of this sea," said Harry, an anxious look all at once overspreading his countenance.

"Open her out," said Joe to the machinist, who stood with his hand on the throttle. "If we don't run any faster than this, we'll have to heave to," he added to Harry in a tone of half-dismay, as the boat's stern was nearly buried by another sea, which came tumbling down upon it like a miniature cataract.

The cutter rushed ahead under four bells, and now began a race with the waves. She was right before the sea. Through an aperture in the canvas Joe could see the gleaming phosphorescent tops of the waves as they hurried on after, to his mind, full of evil intent toward the little boat. At every pitch of the launch, her propeller, thrown

completely out of water, raced like a mill-wheel. The water surged in around the canvas incessantly, and rose, in spite of the rapid bailing, almost to the furnace grating; altogether it was quite alarming. For a time Joe and Harry feared the fires would be put out, and this probability filled them with misgiving. It would bring the expedition to an end and perhaps swamp the boat. But after an hour or more of deep suspense, the boat all at once felt her way into smooth water, and their spirits revived.

They had come suddenly, and indeed unexpectedly, under the shelter of the opposite shore. It was at a point where the land had been eaten away by the action of the sea, thus forming the basin of a minute, semicircular bay. And just ahead of them, her hull completely hidden by a salient angle of the shore, but her masts and rigging visible, lay the flag-ship safely anchored for the night.

But now appeared the greatest obstacle yet encountered. Joe had been anticipating it all along. Until this moment, for some inexplicable reason, the electric search-lights of the flag-ship had not been turned on. All the way from the Daybreak Joe and Harry had congratulated themselves upon this; but now they saw that they, or visitors like themselves, were expected. At the first flash of the light Joe's spirits fell; indeed, he

was quite overcome by his disappointment. But he quickly rose to the emergency; the thought flashed upon him that if he could make his way to the vessel right in the face of this great difficulty without being seen, the achievement would have a much higher value and honor — would, in fact, have some little glory in it.

Ordering the engines to be stopped, he held a brief consultation with Harry. He then went forward to give instructions to Dawson and Conners. The plan of operations was soon fully decided upon, and he directed the boat-hands to roll up the forward curtains, and to get out the oars. Every word was now spoken in a whisper, and each stroke of the oars when they were let fall was as noiseless as though they had been muffled. As yet they were screened by the rim of the crescent-shaped bay into which they had entered. In a few minutes, however, they reached the tip end of its farther boundary, and at a whispered order the rowers ceased pulling. By craning their necks the cadets could now see around the point of land they had reached, beyond which the great ship lay, in her position, relative to them, end on. Her starboard search-light that instant turned in their direction, and in its glare they got the ship's exact bearing from their place of observation. They judged that her distance from their hiding place was about two hundred yards.

"I hope they'll shut off those search-lights," said Harry. "This expedition's gone up if they don't."

"I hope they won't shut them off," said Joe, much to Harry's surprise.

"Why, do you want this to be a fizzle, like all the torpedo attacks?" returned Harry, somewhat nettled.

"Suppose we were going to blow up the Dreadnaught or the Alexandra, would we wait for them to turn off their search-lights for our accommodation? Torpedo warfare has got to be in face of just such obstacles as this," coolly argued Joe.

"Well," continued Harry in a skeptical tone, "if this fails, I never want to see Captain Farradale again."

"It isn't going to fail," returned our hero, his eye kindling with renewed enthusiasm.

The impulsive and somewhat discouraged Harry was reassured by Joe's cool words and manner, and in a few moments was excitedly urging him to rush in and finish up the affair at once. But the utmost caution and coolness were now necessary, and our hero was not to be hurried.

The light was flashed over them the second time, and was again turning away, when Joe gave orders for the boat to round the point. Slowly she crept around, following the shore as close as she could get. The cadets rightly conjectured

that among the outlying rocks and reefs they would more readily escape observation. Yet they realized that they were in momentary danger of running the boat aground, or of staving a hole in her bows by too sharp contact with some bayoneted projection of the shore. But the boat worked on without mishap, and presently the light flashed over them again. This time they made the pleasing discovery that a low reef lay between them and the ship. Only the smokestack of the launch was now visible above this reef, but it was extremely doubtful whether the sharpest lookout could distinguish it. From this new vantage ground Joe renewed his observations, and decided upon his method of attack.

He discovered that when the search-lights were turned directly aft, a cone of darkness lay between them, from fifty to one hundred feet in a line with the stern of the ship. If they could only reach this point before the lights again converged, they would be well shadowed, and the flag-ship's fate, theoretically speaking, at least, would be sealed. This conclusion he communicated to Harry, and waiting a moment for the search-lights to turn forward, the daring work began.

With strong, but quiet strokes the boat was driven into the open water and pointed for the ship. At the utmost risk of detection, the men threw their weight upon the oars,

Steadily the lights were turning, and slowly but evenly the boat was moving up. The broad glare, bright as noonday, had almost reached them again. They were fifty yards away. The lights had now converged, and the boat was barely at the point of juncture. "Oars," whispers our hero, and the boat lay as still upon the water as a mass of sea-weed.

Joe could hear the thumping of his heart against his side. Harry was all a-tremble. Only an instant, which seemed minutes to them, were they in the blaze of the lights. Then darkness again closed around them, and they were still undiscovered.

At this point in the expedition, if they could only have cheered, what a shout would have gone up; for had they not already won a victory? The rule settled upon by the belligerents had been that torpedo boats must get within sixty yards of the enemy without drawing his fire; otherwise they would be ruled out of action. Within this limit the Daybreak's boat now lay, and a complete victory appeared so certain that the cadets almost laughed outright. Once more the oars fell noiselessly, and the boat pushed forward.

But what is this? The boat came to a sudden stand-still, knocking Joe and Harry almost from their feet. They hurried forward, and taking down the turtle-back deck, threw themselves prone upon the bows to ascertain the cause. "A torpedo netting," whispered Joe, "and it's got to be cut."



Conners loaned him his knife, and he sawed away violently upon the obstruction, but to no purpose. The netting was made of steel wire, and was found to be an effectual barrier.

Our hero's mind was again quickly made up as to what would have to be done. Captain Farradale had instructed him to fix a torpedo under the stern of the flag-ship, and the accomplishment of this work was now too near for it to be abandoned. Joe looked the very impersonation of nerve and resolution. Hastily throwing off a part of his clothing, he directed Conners to get the torpedo out over the port bow.

"You're surely not going to swim for it," whispered Harry.

"There's no other way," replied Joe. "You look after the boat, keep everything quiet, and we'll get out of here in no time," he added hopefully.

Thus saying, Joe carefully lowered himself into the water. The torpedo which had been let down by Conners without a sound, was all ready for him. Laying hold of it, and gently pushing it before him, he struck out for the ship. It was a moment of terrible suspense. Just above him, on the starboard and port quarters, were the lookouts, seeming to be unmindful of everything but walking back and forth on their little beats. Pacing the starboard side of the quarter deck was the officer

of the deck, all unsuspecting. Indeed, excepting the electric lights, the appearance of things was such as to lead Joe to the conclusion that on this particular night he could perpetrate almost any disaster upon the flag-ship.

With a firm grip upon the torpedo he slowly worked it along. Suddenly it bumped against the rudder-post, sounding with a heavy thud. Letting go of it a moment, he listened. All continued silent on the great deck above him. He felt quietly around after something to which the torpedo might be attached. "It's a sure thing now," said he to himself, almost laughing aloud in his delight.

But a moment later a whisper reached him from Harry. "Quick, quick!" he called; "we're discovered!"

Did the warning come too late? Harry saw the flash of a Hotchkiss rifled cannon right in our hero's face and eyes, and so stunned was he by the accompanying explosion, that he lost sight of Joe altogether.

## CHAPTER XV.

KATIE AND MAUD.

MR. ASTON was very fond of salt water, and he regarded it a happy coincidence that Mrs. Aston and Katie's affection for the same element was equally strong. It was owing to this fact, no doubt, that the *Celeste*, to which several allusions have already been made, had been built. During her first season, at least, this craft was to be the Astons' summer home; in a sense, their ocean cottage.

The *Celeste* was lying at anchor in Bar Harbor, her rendezvous for the season. She had been off on a trial trip—Mr. Aston and Katie called it her honeymoon—in the Gulf Stream. She had wrestled with huge seas, and given Mr. Aston and Katie the worst shaking up they had ever known, and earned the reputation for herself of being a superb sea-boat. Though she had plunged into as heavy weather as she could ever be likely to encounter, she did not strain a timber, or ship a single sea.

Mr. Aston's four-oared gig had just come around

to the gangway, at the head of which stood Katie. She was in a very impatient mood. She feared she would be late at the steamboat landing. Her old friend and schoolmate, Miss Maud Edgerton, of Boston, is expected by the old steamer Lewiston. Katie urged the boat's crew to their best work, and so preceded the steamer's arrival by several minutes.

And while Katie awaits Miss Maud's arrival, we may as well take a look at the new yacht.

Any owner might feel justly proud of the *Celeste*. Refined and graceful in model, built of the choicest material, representing the best work of a leading naval architect, she elicits on all sides the warmest admiration. The yacht-loving public talk about her as one of the finest accessions of her class ever added to the yachting fleet of this country. She is a sailing yacht of one hundred and fifty tons burden, schooner-rig, built for comfort and safety rather than speed; although to judge from her sharp bows and clear run aft, she is by no means deficient in this latter quality. She is the pride of her sailing master, and the delight of her crew. "Handsome and handy," is the alliteration generally employed by her crew when speaking of her to their sailor friends.

As to her interior no pains or expense had been spared. She was fitted out with every convenience,

not to say luxury. Did not her crew experience a thrill of rapture, when first they beheld her ample forecastle and breathed its fresh, pure air? And the black cook did not cease to grin over his galley during his entire first month's service. As for the sailing master, astonishment laid hold upon him the first time he viewed his quarters. He was forced to take a peep into Mr. Aston's luxurious apartment across the deck, to make sure that he had not been assigned to the wrong room.

The saloon is quite incomparable. It is spacious, handsomely furnished and decorated. The ceiling is frescoed, while the walls are covered with most exquisite pictures and carvings. The sideboards, chairs, sofas, hangings and many other things, have all been specially made for this yacht, and not a few of them are unique and beautiful in themselves. The yacht monogram abounds everywhere; as if the *Celeste* thought of nothing else but herself. It is cut and carved and embroidered into everything wherever there is the smallest excuse for so doing.

And more than all, there is the most perfect system of ventilation; swinging couches, electric bells and lights, turning chairs at table, and so forth; and by universal acknowledgment and consent, the *Celeste* stands in her class the finest yacht afloat. So positive was Katie that she desired to name her the "Golden Lily," but for a

peculiar reason, as we shall hereafter see, her father's preference prevailed.

The steamer has at last rounded Schooner Head, and is now standing up the harbor. Two pretty binocular glasses, one from the steamer's bows, and the other from the wharf, are earnestly searching the crowd in waiting and the crowd in transit. In a moment the glasses go down and handkerchiefs go up and out in mutual and delighted recognition. And hardly has the wharf ceased staggering under the mighty strain of the steamer's hawsers, before the young ladies meet in a warm embrace.

"I'm so glad you've come!" exclaimed Katie. "Bar Harbor is such a lovely place, and the Celeste is such a 'golden lily' of a yacht" — the name she preferred adjectively in her references to the Celeste.

We can hardly get a good look at Miss Maud, Katie is in such transports over her. We can, however, give her only a casual notice as she fills a pleasant, but not important place in this story. We must see how she looks, at any rate, if descriptions of girls are so very commonplace in stories. From the few glimpses we get of her in the crowd we discover that she has become a very attractive young woman. She is quite tall, has a good figure, and is natural and graceful in her movements. She has a sweet little mouth, a fine nose, well-

moulded brow, and rather handsome dark eyes, with hair to correspond. Her face has some imperfections, which no doubt enhance the general effect of her beauty. Katie says she is a beautiful girl, and that ought to suffice us ; for Katie's judgment in this respect may be regarded as final. We notice further, that there is the same old play of humor about Miss Maud's mouth, and the same mischievous twinkle in her eyes. Wonder if Joe Bently would encounter them now with so much dread as on a former occasion ?

All these years Katie and Maud have been the best of friends. They have been together much of the time, attending the same schools and visiting each other during their vacations. A strong, beautiful friendship exists between them, and they are never so happy as when in each other's society. The very day on which Mr. Aston decided to build the *Celeste*, Katie wrote Maud a most cordial invitation to become her guest on the first cruise, with the result which is now beheld.

"Oh ! you don't know what you missed by not going with papa and me on the trial trip !" exclaimed Katie, while they were still wedged in among the crowd.

Katie had strongly urged Miss Maud to accompany them on the first trial of the *Celeste*, but a vision of housed topmasts and green seas had deterred her.

"Did she behave well?" asked Maud, in apparent innocence, thanking her stars that during that critical period she had been safely housed in her Commonwealth Avenue home.

"Behave well! I should say she did," returned Katie with enthusiasm. "She was as manageable as Forest. It blew like a" —

"Wagner orchestra," suggested Maud.

Katie could not inspire Maud with her own enthusiasm — at least, just at this moment. The trip from Portland had been a rueful one to her. She was a bad sailor, and just now she wished that all yachts and steamboats were exhibiting their mammoth skeletons from the rocky shores of the adjacent islands. She thought she could, with a malicious delight, thus transfer their melancholy remains to her sketch-book. But presently, as they reached a corner of the freight house, she asked Katie in a tone of feigned anxiety, if anything was the matter with the wharf.

"What do you mean?" responded Katie in evident alarm.

"Why, just look at the people!"

Everybody, in the greatest hurry and apparent confusion, was vacating the pier. A stream of buck-boards, omnibuses, carriages, drays and pedestrians, was rushing pell-mell for solid ground.

"Something must have happened," continued Maud, "to create a panic like that."



"Don't you know what it is?" asked Katie, laughing heartily. "It's dinner time at the hotels. What does it remind you of?"

"I don't know, unless it's the pigeons of Venice."

Here the conversation was interrupted by the appearance of a boatman, to whom Maud consigned her checks. As she saw how the baggage was being handled, she asked him if he wouldn't be good enough to bring her things off in baskets, in case the trunks didn't hold out.

By a good deal of ducking under ropes and climbing over the latest invoice of canned goods, preserved by the nimbleness of youth, and that sweet little cherub that sat up aloft in the Celeste's rigging, but would persist in leaving his perch to follow Katie every time she went ashore, they at last reached the gig. Here Miss Maud's feelings underwent a change. The lingering overcast of her disagreeable passage began to clear away. She could hardly say enough to express her delight over the long, slender boat, and the handsomely-uniformed crew. And once under way, the fine, rhythmical strokes of the oars, the gondola-like motion of the boat as she slipped through the shining water, the touch of the welcoming sea-breeze upon her cheek, completely revived her and put her in the best of humor, preparing her for that exquisite pleasure which the first full sight of Bar Harbor never fails to impart.

But here lies the yacht, bright and beautiful against the dark masses of birch, spruce and maple, that cling to the sides and summit of Round Porcupine. Katie insists that this name is a misnomer, as the island looks more like a noble lion, set to guard the Celeste, than a porcupine.

“Oh! what a picture!” cried Maud, pausing at the top of the gangway, and surveying the whole broad view.

The great, noble hills of Mt. Desert lay in the background, all golden in the afternoon sun; the rocky headlands, half smothered in foam, threw their fantastic shapes far out into the sea; beyond Egg Rock Light the ocean stretched dreamily away, covered with white-sailed ships moving lazily along over the radiant surface; boats and canoes darted swiftly about, their occupants flaunting the gay colors of their costumes in the face of the sun; sea-birds sported in the bright little coves; and children played and shouted and sang along the beach. Maud stood enchanted, as well she might be with a scene like this, and only Katie's importunity hurried her away.

Katie's attention and interest for the present, were centered in the cabin, into which she ushered her young guest with little ceremony. She could hardly wait until the family welcome was over, before she led her to a state-room door and bade her enter and look around very sharply.

"Oh! how lovely!" exclaimed Maud. "Is it yours?"

"Mine," answered Katie, her eyes fairly sparkling with the secret she was trying to keep back. "It's Miss Maud Edgerton's, 'to have and to hold', and everything else."

"Why, what do you mean?" said Maud, taken all aback.

"I mean that you are its owner — its absolute, *bona fide* owner. It's my present to you. Papa let me furnish and decorate it just as I thought you would like to have it. Now how do you like it?"

The scene which followed is hardly to be described. There were embraces, tears, exclamations and pet names. Mr. Aston had empowered Katie to do with this room as she chose, furnishing ample means for the gratification of her taste, and Maud now rejoiced in the possession, as she expressed it, "of the sweetest, prettiest state-room afloat." She was Katie's dearest friend, and nothing was quite good enough for her.

"I'm so glad you like it," said Katie affectionately, after Maud had expressed her appreciation of it many times over; "but here are your trunks, now. Get your prettiest yachting suit right out, and we'll form ourselves into a board of inspection, and take a look at the Celeste."

Miss Maud's proprietary rights having been duly

established, she was as impatient as Katie to make an inspectional tour of the yacht. But the trunks for the moment proved the more irresistible. Whoever knew a yacht to supersede in interest newly-arrived feminine apparel? Through Katie's suggestion and advice, Miss Maud had made elaborate preparations for the diversified occupations and sports of Bar Harbor. What numbers of letters had passed between them, and what anxiety had been experienced over the handsome wardrobe now being overhauled! "Overhauled" was the word used by the young ladies as comporting more nearly with their surroundings. After a minute examination of the contents of the trunks, interspersed with observations and comments on the social and other customs of Bar Harbor, Katie told her friend without a shade of envy that she could easily pass muster on any Bar Harbor occasion; and, if she chose, be the belle of the season. Over and over again Katie had apprised her of the Bar-Harborite fondness for color, and she had come prepared to array herself in the chromatic splendors of the tropics, and thus, if she desired, capture the town.

"You're ready for everything, I see," observed Katie, with a smile.

"What do you mean by everything?"

"Oh! yachting, canoeing and what the people here call 'rocking'."

"And lawning and hopping," laughingly interrupted Maud.

"There's so much to do," continued Katie, "and nobody to go about with us but papa; and it's such a bore to him!"

"If only Ned could have come," regretfully observed Maud, "what jolly times we would have had; he's so fond of Mt. Desert, you know!"

"Oh! he's coming in August," replied Katie. "Why, you darling girl!" she suddenly exclaimed, dropping a piece of Maud's finest apparel upon the floor; I didn't see that before! You don't mean to say" —

"O, yes," said Maud, blushing and holding up a ring to give Katie a better view; "Ned wouldn't take No for an answer, and what could I do?"

In the excitement that followed this mutual discovery and revelation, both wardrobe and yacht were entirely forgotten. If Joe could only have listened to the ensuing conversation, what would have been his thoughts? He had been telling himself all along, that Ned Brentford and Katie were in love with each other. This thought had somewhat reassured him; for, he naturally reasoned, his friends would credit him with sufficient discernment to see how matters stood. And they would think he would thus be prevented from cherishing anything more than a friendly regard for Katie. As to the suspicion Mrs. Pepper had

created, in his more hopeful moods, he trusted that time and tact would remove that.

Still Joe could not get over his hurt from the feeling that this woman had awakened distrust toward him in the minds of his friends. From what he had observed of her he was sure she would make out a strong case against him. She would counsel the utmost care and prudence as regarded his association with Katie; and in the frosty atmosphere of prudence, the vital currents of the friendship he valued so dearly would soon run cold.

Why had Mrs. Pepper crossed his path to give him so much perplexity and distress? Joe was too young and inexperienced to realize that his trouble over Mrs. Pepper, was in part the struggle of his own heart to quench its love for Katie; that it was largely the self-assertiveness of his regard for his young friend.

"Oh!" said Katie, after Maud had confided to her the whole story of the engagement, "I forgot to mention Joe Bently. He's coming in the Day-break. He'll scale mountains, sail seas, penetrate anemone caves with us to our hearts' content."

At the sound of Joe Bently's name Maud gave a little start. "You can't guess where I saw Joe Bently, a week or two ago," she began.

"You couldn't have seen him anywhere. He's at sea, nobody knows where," said Katie.

"How do you know he's at sea?" asked Maud, piquing Katie's curiosity more and more.

"Because I got a letter from him the day before the Daybreak sailed. It was such a formal, queer letter, too. Mamma and I were greatly amused over it. It began 'Dear Miss Aston,' when only last month I told him he might address me as he used to, by my simple name, Katie. We've kept the run of Joe so long that we feel he almost belongs to us, you know. But tell me where you saw him!"

"It was the night mamma and I returned from New York on the Bristol. A lady attempted to walk in her sleep, and fell overboard."

"Well, that is all very interesting," laughed Katie, "but not to the point."

"Don't be impatient. The Daybreak happened to be passing, and one of the sailors jumped overboard and kept the woman from drowning until Joe Bently rescued them with one of the ship's boats."

"It was Dicky Dawson, I know!" exclaimed Katie, with great animation. Simply from Joe's descriptions of Dawson, she had gotten to feel an unusual interest in him. "But how did you know it was Joe?" she added.

"Oh! the captain of the steamer hailed the boat, and asked who the boat officer was. I have a bone to pick with Joe Bently. Mamma and I

waved our handkerchiefs to him in the moonlight, but he didn't deign to answer our signal. I shall just be on my dignity with him," concluded Maud, with an air of assumed hauteur.

"Isn't it strange about Joe?" said Katie, all absorbed in Maud's account; "he's always turning up where there's any danger. I read a while ago in the Newport News, that the first night he stood watch he was fired upon by two scoundrels."

"How was that?" asked Maud.

"Just because he was ordered to capture them, for smuggling liquor. It wasn't his fault that he had to obey orders, you know; and he might have been shot!"

"Soldiers are ordered into battle. Is that any reason they shouldn't be shot?" returned Maud, laughing that Katie should think the ruffians were morally obligated not to fire upon Joe because he was ordered to arrest them. "But my Cousin Harry says that Joe is the bravest cadet in the Navy."

"Nobody would ever know it; he's so excessively modest," observed Katie.

"Did you enjoy his visit?" inquired Maud.

"Oh! ever so much. But he didn't have a good time at all. Aunt Pepper was more peppery than ever, and papa doesn't like the Navy, you know, if he did get Joe into it. The poor fellow was quite miserable."



“Oh, ho!” said Miss Maud to herself, at this sympathetic little speech. And what would Mrs. Pepper have thought could she have heard it also? And she might have heard it had she listened sharply, for she was not many state-rooms distant. This little breath of sentiment right from Katie’s kind heart she would have been positive was a premonitory symptom of a fresh breeze about to spring up from the same quarter. As certain of this would she have been as an old sailor would be from which point of the compass the wind was going to blow next, by the first faint breath of air that touched his moistened finger.

And what would Joe himself have thought could he have heard Katie’s comments upon his visit, the pleasantest — for the time being, though afterwards attended in his imagination by such direful consequences — of his whole life?

Toward evening the next day, as they all sat on deck watching the effect of the sunlight upon the slopes and summits of Newport and Green Mountains, an exclamation from Katie caused everybody to look seaward. A ship strongly resembling a man-of-war, was just coming into view in the offing. Glasses were leveled at the incoming vessel, and after a long time it was decided that she must be the Daybreak.

Katie and Maud kept up a vigorous waving of handkerchiefs as the stranger, having rounded

Schooner Head, came slowly up to her anchorage, but there was no response. The young ladies searched the faces of the officers about the deck, to get a glimpse of Joe and Harry, but neither of the young men could be distinguished.

"I won't speak to Joe Bently!" said Maud, with a juvenile pout upon her pretty lips. "This is the second time he has treated my signal with contempt."

## CHAPTER XVI.

### LETTING THE CAT OUT OF THE BAG.

ALL night long the lookouts on the Daybreak strained their eyes watching for the return of our hero and his party. As hour after hour wore away, and no signs of the boat appeared, Captain Farradale became very anxious. He knew that the cutter was not all that she should be, although he regarded her as safe enough if properly handled. But as the weather had turned out, he began to fear that he had underestimated the dangers of the expedition. He had the utmost confidence in Joe, so, after much thought, the captain concluded that the delay was owing to the extreme vigilance of the flag-ship. He could see the electric lights searching the encompassing darkness, and he was aware that the greatest caution was necessary, and no little time required, to fix the torpedo.

Still he could not dispel his anxiety. Nor did he feel at rest until day had dawned. The disagreeable night was succeeded by a most beautiful morning. The first brilliant glow that lit up Gar-

diner's Bay, showed the little launch creeping slowly back to the ship. Great was the enthusiasm over her return. There had been a positive conviction, a faith without a doubt, among the crew, that Joe and Harry would not come back defeated, and now they could hardly keep from giving them a rousing cheer as the boat drew up. But a great dread fell upon all as she came alongside, and an assistant surgeon from the flag-ship stepped out upon the gangway, followed by Harry and Connors bearing Joe in their arms.

The story is soon told. In one respect, indeed, Harry's warning had come too late. Joe had been successful in attaching the dummy torpedo to the port rudder chain, and had thrown himself on his back in the water to take breath when the Hotchkiss cannon was discharged. The man stationed at this gun had seen the boat, but had not discovered Joe in the water. To avoid firing his blank cartridge upon those in the boat he turned the piece downward, and, unconsciously, blazed away right into Joe's face and eyes.

Fortunately for Joe, however, his face was partially submerged; otherwise the powder would have disfigured him for life. As it was, he was badly burned about the eyes. And this was by no means the worst. The marine stationed at the life-buoy heard the slight splash which Joe accidentally made as he threw himself back in the

water. His curiosity being aroused, he looked over the ship's stern, where he caught a glimpse of Joe's upturned face.

Alas for poor Joe! Just as the explosion from the gun took place the lookout let go the buoy, which in falling dealt our hero a heavy blow upon the head, striking him senseless. The lookout believed he was befriending one of his own ship-mates, who, he supposed, had accidentally fallen overboard.

Although Harry came near being thrown from his feet by the concussion of the Hotchkiss cannon, and was, as we have seen, slightly dazed, he at once realized that something must have happened to his comrade. Acting upon his first impulse, he threw himself into the water, and was quickly at Joe's side. Not a second too soon did he reach him; for Joe was just disappearing as Harry laid hold upon him and raised his head above water. A moment later and he would doubtless have been beyond all rescue.

The flag-ship was in a state of commotion. The cry, "Man overboard!" had been given, and all had hurried on deck. The captain and admiral left their respective cabins, and stood among the men and officers, most interested spectators. It took but a few moments to get the imperilled cadets out of the water, but considerable time was required for Joe's resuscitation.

The surgeons found an ugly wound upon his head which, they said, had it been received a little lower down, would have proved fatal. His eyes had also suffered, but, they hoped, only temporary injury.

The members of the sick bay were amused at Joe's first words, as consciousness returned. They were, "Well, the torpedo's all right, anyway; no matter what's happened me."

Not many days after, Joe was groping about in Captain Farradale's cabin. A portion of it had been darkened for his benefit, for his eyes could not bear the light. Joe was in no desirable frame of mind when the Daybreak was sighted by Katie Aston, putting her best foot forward to reach her anchorage before night should come. The rattle of her cable shortly after, as her anchor sped to its holding ground, sounded a knell in Joe's soul. Mrs. Pepper had been in his thoughts all the way from Gardiner's Bay to Mt. Desert, and here he was now probably within a stone's throw of this destroyer, as he affirmed to himself, of the happiest friendship of his life.

It seemed very strange to the party on board the Celeste that all the next day no signs of either Joe or Harry were seen about the Daybreak's deck. Mr. Aston thought the least Bently could do was to report his arrival, and Maud was not slow in expressing her mind as to her cousin's

indifference. From the outset each young lady fancied that she had a personal grievance. Such inattention, we might almost say incivility, on the part of a protégé—for they rather regarded Joe as such—and a cousin, was no slight offense in their eyes.

Another day passed, and still nothing was heard of either cadet. In some way or other, Captain Farradale had, meanwhile, learned that the Astons were Joe's friends, and he had offered to forward a note, telling them of the accident. But Joe begged him not to do so; for he was now more averse to meeting them than ever. He had about decided to accept a leave of absence, which Captain Farradale had been kind enough to offer. This the doctor thought he might do in a week, at least. He would go to his own home, and that would prevent his meeting Katie. He felt sure that Mrs. Pepper had a predilection for yachting; also, that when he was well enough to do so, should he go on board the *Celeste*, this lady would be the first to confront him. Nevertheless, Joe cherished a hope that Mr. Aston might take it into his head to pay him a visit, though why he should do so he could not give a sufficient reason even to himself. And his mind was kept in a state of great disquiet.

How long this condition of affairs might have continued, had not a slight accident put things to rights, it is not safe to conjecture. One morning,

when ashore, Captain Farradale left his gig hauled out at the landing in charge of Dicky Dawson. Now it so happened that the Celeste's gig, with Katie and her friend on board, made a trip to the town shortly after. In coming up to the landing, her headway was not checked soon enough, and she ran plump into the Daybreak's boat. Dawson rose quickly from his seat in the gig, and, doffing his cap to the young ladies, looked as if he was prepared to dispute with the fair mistress of the strange boat as to where the blame for the collision belonged.

"Oh! it was our fault," said Katie, quickly divining Dawson's look. "You should be more careful, coxswain," she added, in a tone of gentle reproof, to the man in charge of the Celeste's boat.

"I begs pardon," said Dicky; "I's sorry yer starboard arrer's knocked off."

"That beautiful arrow!" exclaimed Miss Maud. "What a shame!"

"Well, it can't be helped now," said Katie, leaning over the side and trying to get a look at the gig's bow. "Did we injure your boat," she inquired, looking up at Dawson, who was still politely standing.

"No, Miss; she didn't mind it. It's allers the other boat as gits hurt with her."

All at once Dicky began to grow uneasy. He



became conscious that the young ladies were gazing upon him very earnestly.

At first they supposed his boat belonged to one of the numerous yachts in the harbor, but had now discovered that she was a man-of-war boat.

"Does this boat belong to the Daybreak?" asked Maud.

"It's the capen's gig, Miss. It's waitin' fur him."

"Have you a cadet on board named Harry Edgerton?" continued Maud.

"We has a cadet of that name, Miss; but he's away in New York."

Harry had left the Daybreak at Gardiner's Bay, with permission to rejoin her in one week at Bar Harbor.

"Is Joe Bently on leave, too?" propounded Katie.

"No, no, Miss," said Dawson, shaking his head, while the tears sprang to his eyes.

"What! has anything happened to him?" asked Katie, alarmed at Dawson's manner.

"Yes, Miss," said Dawson, sorrowfully. "Oh! but he's a brave lad; he's a brave lad."

The young ladies dare not utter another word. For some dreadful revelation concerning Joe was pending, they believed. During the silence Katie was indulging in no little resentment toward the Aston family, herself included, for what at this

instant seemed to her their utter indifference to the existence of Joe Bently since the Daybreak's arrival.

"Not as I wishes to make yer feel bad, Miss; fur I sees ye knows Joe Bently," Dawson went on with painful slowness; "but he's very bad, very bad."

"Do tell me what has happened to him," pleaded Katie at last, with a trembling voice.

Thereupon Dawson proceeded to relate the tale of Joe's mishap to his excited and sympathetic auditors. Little by little they learned the whole story, which Dawson, from his great love and sympathy for Joe, told with real, if rude, eloquence. The young ladies were greatly shocked at the recital, and would have received the impression that Joe was in an extremely critical condition had they not, by careful questioning, got at pretty nearly the state of the case.

"Poor fellow," said Katie; "he's always getting into trouble."

"It's ginerally the likes o' him as somethin's allers a-happenin' to," said Dawson. "There's a grudge in natur' ag'in good young men, Miss."

"I hope not," said Katie, amused in spite of herself.

"And pertikerlerly in a seafarin' life," added Dawson.

The young ladies smiled at Dawson's not alto-

gether novel, but rather pertinent views, and Maud inquired if Joe was well enough to go about the ship.

"He knocks about the cabin, Miss; but it ain't his mashed head nor his blinted eyes as breaks him up so," returned Dawson.

"What is it, then?" questioned Katie.

"He's worritted about somethin', Miss."

"Perhaps it's his mother," said Katie, sympathetically. "Maybe she's ill; he thinks so much of her."

"No, Miss, there ain't no mother in this business," said Dawson, with emphasis. "But I allers tries to cheer him up," he proceeded. "'Why,' says I, the last night we was on watch together, says I, 'how can you be a frettin' on yourself so, sir?' 'How do you know I's frettin' on myself?' says he. 'Oh! I knows you be, sir,' says I. 'If you has trouble, you ought to remember what's inter the Bible.' 'Well, what's inter the Bible?' says he. 'I's no scholar, as you knows, sir,' says I; 'but don't it say somewhere that the way is so plain that a seafarin' man, though a fool, need not err ther'in? Now,' says I, 'how can you be a takin' on in yer mind so, rememberin' all that; an' the stars a-lookin' down on us, too, so beautiful and serene like; an' the sea a-shinin' like a silver dish? It's the sailor's promise,' says I, 'as I's heern tell the rainbow's the farmer's.'"

Dicky did not look surprised to see the young ladies shaking with laughter when he had finished his recital. He had observed the same phenomenon in Joe on the night referred to.

"Well, what did he say to that?" asked Katie when she had recovered breath.

"He turned it right back on to me, Miss. 'Now,' says he, in the kindest an' most delectable manner, 'now, Dawson,' " —

"What!" interrupted Katie, "are you Dicky Dawson?"

"I 'lows I be, Miss; it's the name I ginerly goes by."

If boats were not such ticklish affairs, Katie's plump little hand would, the next instant, have been in Dawson's big brown palm. As it was, she gave him such an admiring look that he fairly blushed. Joe had told her so much about Dawson that her imagination had clothed him with a romantic interest. And now that he stood before her she was in no wise disappointed. He was a striking appearing old sailor-man, full to the brim of gallantry and kindness. His bronzed face fairly shone with good-nature, and he had talked so tenderly about Joe that, notwithstanding the amusing character of his remarks, the young ladies had been quite melted by them. It is extremely doubtful, however, if this relaxed state of feeling would have been so easily produced had Dawson related

the same incidents concerning anybody else but Joe.

But two obstacles were now in the way of further conversation : the arrival of Captain Farradale, and Katie's anxiety to make known to her father what she had learned about Joe. Whatever may have been the object of the young ladies' visit ashore it was quickly compassed, and they were shortly after on board the *Celeste* again. Katie told the story with great volubility. She would have been highly amusing had not the subject been of such a serious nature. She concluded the account with the observation : "We might have known that something had happened to Joe. He thinks too much of papa ever to neglect paying his respects to him."

Could our hero have known of this conversation, he would have been unmanned indeed. During the talk that followed it was decided that Joe needed a change ; he must be transferred to the yacht as soon as practicable. And could he have heard, shortly after, Mrs. Aston giving orders to make ready the largest state-room in the cabin for his reception, it is doubtful if he would have believed his own hearing.

That afternoon, however, Mr. Aston started in the yacht's gig for the Daybreak, with full authority to return with Joe Bently in custody. The sympathetic young ladies charged him not to

listen to any protests from either the captain or the cadet himself, but to summarily remove him from one vessel to the other.

While awaiting the result of Mr. Aston's visit, we may as well look in upon Mrs. Pepper. It may be gratifying to learn if there is any justice in our hero's mental accusations. As we have already met her on board the yacht with her friends, it is hardly necessary to say that there had been unwilling acquiescence on their part in her decision to thus spend the season with them. So Joe's fear, therefore, that she was a member of the yachting party, was well grounded. So, also, were his conjectures in relation to the feelings she bore him. Joe had read her character, and remarked on the tireless use of her observing faculties. He was sharp enough, also, to hold her before his mind in as careful an analysis as he could the toughest kind of a theorem. But in herself it must be admitted that Mrs. Pepper was not a very difficult proposition.

He had no sooner left Mr. Aston's house on his last visit, than she entered upon an active crusade against him. "I should think, Franklin," said she on that very evening as she sat sewing with Mrs. Aston (Katie had bade them good-night and gone to her room), "I should think, Franklin," she repeated, "you would be more discriminating in regard to your visitors."

"What do you mean?" said Mr. Aston, looking up quickly from his paper.

"I mean just that."

"Well, I confess I do not understand you," he continued.

"A man who has daughters should pay some attention to the station in life of the young men who are interested in them," proceeded Mrs. Pepper, speaking on general principles.

"I may be dull of comprehension," said Mr. Aston, with a poor attempt at concealing his annoyance, "but I fail to see what you are driving at."

"Do you think it's just the thing to foster a friendship between that young Bently and Katie?" said Mrs. Pepper, now dropping all vagueness. "Young girls, you know, are very susceptible, especially in the case of brass buttons."

Mr. and Mrs. Aston were accustomed to Mrs. Pepper's keen interest in everything appertaining to themselves and Katie, and to her great plainness of speech; but on this occasion they were taken completely aback. This was a phase of the matter which was entirely new to them. Never had a suspicion crossed their minds that anything more than friendship could result from the acquaintance of Katie and Joe. And now Mrs. Pepper's words were so much in the nature of a surprise that neither of them uttered a syllable.

"Unless you want Katie to marry a naval offi-

cer," added Mrs. Pepper, thinking their apprehension still so extremely wooden that it needed another wedge to open it, "you'd better not encourage any more visits from Joe Bently."

This was the way Mrs. Pepper let the cat out of the bag; as Joe surmised she would do. And he thought, so unappreciative was he of Mrs. Pepper, if there had been no cat in the bag she would have created one merely for the delight of letting it out. It is certain that on this particular evening she was not long in untying the strings of the bag in question, and the cat came out with a leap.

"I'm sure," said Mr. Aston, when he had somewhat recovered his senses, "that Bently would never allow himself to indulge any feeling toward Katie stronger than ordinary friendship, without our knowledge and approval."

"He's the soul of manliness and honor," said Mrs. Aston, with considerable warmth.

"You don't know these young naval officers," answered Mrs. Pepper, with a deprecating shake of the head.

"I know him," said Mr. Aston with emphasis.

"I know him, too," continued she with asperity. "There isn't one of them but thinks he ought to marry an heiress or a princess. You'd better take my advice, and be on the safe side."

"How on the safe side?" asked Mrs. Aston.

"By not inviting him here any more."



"That's a matter for us to decide," said Mr. Aston very gingerly.

"Well, I thought it my duty to warn you," replied Mrs. Pepper with extreme tartness.

"You'll pardon me, then," said Mr. Aston with some severity; "but I do not think the circumstances at all call for the warning. And, further, I want Katie to hear none of this nonsense."

Mrs. Pepper was by no means quenched by this. She was accustomed to rejoinders calculated to bring her insinuating, mischievous observations to an end. She now proceeded to set forth the terrible danger in which Katie stood of having Joe Bently for a lover, and to assail Joe for his daring, robber-like presumption in the case. Finally she remarked:

"Well, it isn't my affair. If you want to throw her away, you can do so, for all of me." Thus washing her hands of the matter, she flounced out of the room.

Thus left to themselves, Mr. and Mrs. Aston looked at each other a full half-minute without speaking. Mrs. Pepper had certainly placed Joe in a light in which they had never before viewed him. And the light was even stronger than he had suspected it could be. And now how did Joe appear to his friends, illuminated by Mrs. Pepper's suspicions? We think he did not appear one whit the worse. Indeed, he came out of it, if anything,

rather the better. In the first place, everybody knows that it is no easy matter to excite prejudice against a modest, manly young fellow like Joe, particularly in the minds of his friends. And in this respect Mrs. Pepper had overshot the mark. It brought Mrs. Aston to his defense. She declared that he had been badly treated, and that it would be most ungenerous to place him under any proscription on account of a mere surmise. She was well aware of Mrs. Pepper's talent for hatching up things; and both she and Mr. Aston were well convinced that this thing had been hatched up. Joe himself, Mrs. Aston said, could he know what had passed that evening, would be chagrined and disturbed beyond measure.

So it was decided that the Aston mansion should not be closed against Joe, as Mrs. Pepper desired. His friends believed him to be honest and open as the day; too chivalrous in his relations to them to ever indulge a thought that he had the right to step in, simply because they had invited him to their house, and attempt to woo Katie. In a word, they felt that they could trust Joe to be no more than Katie's friend. As it turned out, Mrs. Pepper, in letting the cat out of the bag, which Joe had so much feared, got all the scratches herself.

And this was the state of things when Mr. Aston started for the Daybreak, commissioned to bring back to the Celeste with him Joe Bently.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE SPRING KEEPS BUBBLING.

JOE was reclining in Captain Farradale's easy chair, enduring the trial of his enforced seclusion and inactivity as best he could, when Dicky Dawson returned from the trip ashore. He had become more unhappy in his mind than ever, and was now blaming himself for what he had scarcely thought of before. For several days the Day-break had been anchored within a stone's throw of the Celeste, but he had permitted no word to be sent his friends. What would they think of such negligence on the part of one who had so recently enjoyed their hospitality? He could not, of course, discharge his social debt by calling upon them, but he might at least have sent his regrets. This he had not done, and he was now depressed by the thought that they would consider his disregard of a plain social duty inexcusable. Whatever his standing with the Astons might be, he reasoned, it could have done no harm to have sent them some information concerning himself. If

for no other reason, it would have relieved the awkwardness of the situation.

As he had received no word from the Celeste, his surmises concerning Mrs. Pepper had been greatly strengthened. He could not rid himself of the feeling that, through her advice, he had been quietly dropped. If it were not so, he argued, Mr. Aston would have taken some little trouble before now to ascertain what had become of him. In spite of all he could do, this thought tormented him: the old cordial relations had come to an end.

And for this he did not blame Mr. and Mrs. Aston. They would, he believed, rigorously apply the principle of selection to Katie's friendships, and he must be a rare young man indeed who could aspire to a permanent place among her friends. Now that he was successfully launched upon an honorable profession, what more could he expect from them? As they had done in his case, so, from their great generosity of nature, would they do in that of some other. They would select some more deserving boy than he had been, to whom they would give a lift in life, and let him, with their best wishes, go his way.

Yet poor Joe, with much sadness of heart, wished that Mrs. Pepper's suspicions had not been interposed between him and the Astons. How glad he would have been to have managed

this matter himself; to have trimmed his own sails to suit the conditions and circumstances of this friendship.

And for this we must not think Joe over-sensitive or too much given to self-disparagement. It was his exalted reverence and love for his friends, the innate chivalry of his nature, which led him to perceive the delicacy of his relations to them, and to take what he conceived to be their side of the case. His ideas were unusually elevated on the subject, even though he felt morbid over it.

Another thing about it, too, was his discovery that no amount of repression he might bring to bear upon his thoughts and feelings, could make him indifferent toward Katie. His efforts to do so—and they had been continuous—were a good deal like throwing chips and grass into a spring with the expectation of quenching it. In spite of all he could do, the spring would keep bubbling up. His only hope now was, that he might keep the spring so well hidden that nobody would know of its existence but himself. Yet the spectre of Mrs. Pepper would not down; she had penetrated his secret; she had certainly got a peep at that spring; at which thought Joe inwardly groaned.

This was about the state of Joe's mind when Dicky Dawson, shortly after his arrival with the captain, paid him a visit in the cabin. Ever since the accident, Dawson had been permitted to do

any little thing for Joe's comfort he saw fit, and he had come almost to fill the place of a servant. Nothing delighted him so much as to attend Joe. Indeed, so anxious was he to do little offices for him, that he had persuaded the cabin boy to yield a number of his prerogatives in his favor. Joe humored his old friend all he could, and contrived to have some little service for him every day, and Dawson's head was up in the clouds.

On this occasion he cared for the gig, and waited round until Captain Farradale left the cabin and came out upon the quarter deck. He then presented himself before the orderly at the cabin door, and peremptorily demanded admission. Something weighty was on his mind, the nature of which we may easily guess. Sidling into Joe's darkened apartment, without waiting, as he generally did, for him to have the first word, he began: "I begs pardon, sir, but you has friends in Bar Harbor."

"How's that?" said Joe with a start, trying to read the expression of Dawson's countenance in the dim light.

"I seen 'em, sir. They b'longs to that fine, hansom' yacht there, anchored off the Round Porcupine."

"You mean Mr. Aston, I suppose? He's here in the Celeste."

"No; it ain't no man, sir. They's two as pooty

young gals as I ever seed in any country. They run ag'in the Olga and knocked the arrer offen their gig."

The "Olga" was the name of Captain Farra-dale's gig.

"How do you know they are my friends?" Joe asked. "There's only one young lady here that I know."

"They axed arter yer, sir."

"Oh! did they?" inquired Joe, brightening up.

"Leastways, the tall one axed arter Mr. Edgerton; an' the little one," added Dawson with quaint emphasis, "axed arter you."

"Maud Edgerton!" said Joe, in surprise. "Is she here?"

"They didn't give no names. But they appears to know a good deal about you, sir."

"You of course told them that I was laid up on board ship?" said Joe, after drawing from Dawson a more circumstantial account of his meeting with the young ladies.

"I tells 'em the whole story, sir."

Joe was minded to inquire if they evinced any particular solicitude for him in his misfortune, but he checked the impulse.

"They thinks a deal o' you, sir," Dawson went on. "When I says to 'em that you was very bad, they jest got as white as a scrubbed hammock cloth, an' their chins dropped like heavin' a lead.

They must think a powerful heap o' you, sir. Be they relations o' yourn?"

Joe informed Dawson most cheerfully that they were not relatives of his. He didn't care now how inquisitive Dawson might become, though his inquisitiveness was only apparent. Such a complete revulsion of feeling Joe had never before experienced in so short a time. He might have embraced Dawson if the bandages on his head would not have been imperilled thereby. He would send a note to the Celeste that very afternoon, and Dawson should be the bearer.

"But, says I to 'em, sir," continued Dawson, "'it ain't his mashed head an' his blinted eyes as breaks him up so'" —

"What!" said Joe, in a faint voice, holding his breath in fear of what was coming.

"'He's worritted about somethin','" says I. I hopes, sir, I wasn't givin' nothin' away," he added, in a tone of humble apology, as he noticed the change that had come over Joe.

"Did you say that?" said Joe, sinking back into his chair with a look of extreme mortification.

Dawson was so greatly distressed that he could not answer. He hung his head quite pitifully.

"And did she say anything?" asked Joe, after a silence of a full minute.

"She says as it must be his mother as he's in trouble about."



"Oh!" said Joe, a sigh of relief escaping him.  
"Did you say any more?"

"I only says, sir, 'there ain't no mother in this business.' I's very sorry, sir; I sees I done wrong," and Dawson showed tenfold more penitence than Joe had ever seen him manifest before.

Joe could not get angry with his old friend, but it seemed that everything was conspiring against him. This was a tumble to his pride that he had not anticipated; and it had been partly his own fault. In the interview Dawson had referred to at the landing, Joe had been at no pains to conceal the fact that something weighed heavily on his mind, though of what that something was he had given no intimation. And Dawson had now made a clean breast of it to Katie, the last one in the world whom he would have know anything about it. No doubt Mrs. Pepper had sought to prejudice her against him as well as her parents, and she would be quick to infer that this trouble Dawson had revealed related to herself. And he feared, too, that Dawson had told even more than he admitted. He had permitted him to come perilously near the edge of his secret; but had it been an Eastern dervish with whom he had conversed, he would as soon have expected the result to reach Katie's ears as in the case of Dawson. "Well, Dawson," said he at last, touched by the old man's dejection, "don't think about it any more. It's

scarcely worth mentioning. It was foolish of me to show any feeling. It was only wounded pride, after all; and such wounds do us good." A little further talk and Dawson left the cabin.

Joe was not permitted to remain long by himself. He had just entered upon the contemplation of this new phase of the difficulty, when Mr. Aston's voice greeted him upon the quarter deck. This gentleman had, meanwhile, reached the Day-break, and was explaining the purpose of his visit to Captain Farradale. Joe heard him tell the captain that young Bently was a friend of his family — a kind of protégé of his (how Joe hated that word now) — and that the ladies of the *Celeste* would never forgive him for having neglected to hunt him up. "I hope, sir," he went on, "his accident is not of a very serious nature."

But by this time they had entered the cabin, and a moment later Mr. Aston stood in Joe's presence. "My dear fellow!" he exclaimed in a tone of genuine sympathy, "why have you kept this from us?"

The tears sprang to Joe's eyes. In truth, he was so moved by Mr. Aston's kindness, that he could not speak a word. So wrought up had he been over his friends' supposed change of feelings toward him, that this unexpected turn of affairs quite overpowered him. It flashed upon him that perhaps Mrs. Pepper had not done as he had con-

jectured, after all; but he entertained this idea only for an instant.

"I told him," said Captain Farradale, answering for Joe, "that he ought to send you word about himself. He's afraid of those patches on his head. But wounds received in battle, you know," he added, good-humoredly, "are not to be ashamed of."

Joe managed at last to stammer out some excuse or other for not letting his friends know his condition, and was glad that his portion of the cabin was dark enough to hide his confusion.

"I have come," said Mr. Aston, after drawing from Joe an unwilling and succinct account of the torpedo expedition, several omissions meanwhile being supplied by Captain Farradale; "I have come," he repeated, "with your captain's permission, to take you back with me to the Celeste. You can be moved, I see; and Mrs. Aston and Katie insist that you need a change. We have to let the women folks have their way, you know," he added laughingly.

"Oh! certainly," said Captain Farradale. "I will let him go with pleasure. He finds it very stupid shut up here away from his messmates."

Captain Farradale's tone implied that Joe had suffered real privation in being taken from the choleric Hubbins, the tormenting Coverly, and the other members of the mess, including the Aztec.

The captain had not once thought of taking any credit to himself for giving up half of his cabin to a wounded cadet, and using every means in his power for that cadet's comfort and diversion. But this was Captain Farradale. Joe was not the first cadet who had realized substantial benefit from his goodness of heart.

What could Joe do? His better judgment told him that he ought not to go to the *Celeste*. If the invitation had only been given by note or by letter, he could have declined with good grace; but here was Mr. Aston right before him, talking to him in the cheeriest manner, telling him how soon he would be fully restored on board his pleasant yacht. And Captain Farradale, too, had taken sides with Mr. Aston, and had promptly offered him a week's leave to begin with. Is it any wonder Joe's spirits began to rise, and that he thought it would be a nice thing, after all, to go back with Mr. Aston?

"The yacht's very quiet," resumed Mr. Aston, after a moment's digression with Captain Farradale upon the advantage a breakwater would be to Bar Harbor. "There are only two besides ourselves—Mrs. Pepper and Miss Edgerton, Katie's friend. You've met both of them before. It won't be like going among entire strangers, you know."

If the young ladies' chins, according to Daw-

son's account, had dropped like heaving a lead, Joe's chin now dropped like heaving an anchor.

"Please, sir," he began, greatly embarrassed, "I think I'd better not go. It will be giving you unnecessary trouble. Besides, my eyes are hardly well enough. It wouldn't be prudent. I thank you very much, sir; but it will be better for me not to leave the ship."

Mr. Aston now warmly urged Joe to accompany him back to the yacht. Joe's reason for not going was too transparent. Mr. Aston saw well enough that he was holding back from fear or dislike of Mrs. Pepper, he didn't know which. He of course knew nothing of Joe's special difficulty in the case of that lady; but he knew she had not been friendly, and that she was not friendly, to the cadet, the reason for which we have already seen. However, he was determined that Joe should become their guest.

It will be remembered that Mr. and Mrs. Aston felt under the deepest obligation to Joe. They knew the little they could do for his material welfare was insignificant compared with the real debt they owed him. Through his bravery when a mere boy, Katie's life had been saved, and they felt that that act alone gave him the strongest claim upon their consideration and friendship. The least they could do was to make him heartily welcome at their home. In this particular instance he needed

their care, and it was a good opportunity for them to discharge some little of their debt to him.

The terrible risk which Mrs. Pepper thought would be incurred by having Joe around had given them no concern. Katie wasn't an innocent little plum, waiting to be stolen from them by any young fellow in brass buttons who might come along; and they knew that Joe Bently had no idea that she was. They felt, or would have felt had they given it a thought, that if Katie had hung all ready to drop right into Joe's hand, under the circumstances, he would not have stretched it out to receive her.

The upshot of it all was, Joe had to go on board the *Celeste*; but he did not return with Mr. Aston. It was hard work to bring himself to the point of going, but how could he help it? The doctor was sent for, and he said that undoubtedly the change would do him good; the captain agreed with the doctor; and the invitation was of such a nature that he couldn't help accepting it. There were some things about it that he could not at all understand; but it made his head ache to try to understand anything now, so he gave up trying, and said he would be happy to go. And the next day, before twelve o'clock had been made on board the *Daybreak*, he was delivered bag and baggage to his friends in the *Celeste*. Dicky Dawson conveyed him alongside in the captain's

gig. Dawson was in high spirits, for he was fascinated with the yacht and everything appertaining to her. He thought his young friend would soon "mend with them pooty young gals round." "If I busted Mr. Bently all up in his mind," he chuckled to himself, "they'll fix 'im up in no time. These navy doctors is good enough," he added, "but they ain't like wimmin; wimmin is so soothin' an' delecit in their ways."

To be sure, Joe felt extremely awkward and ill at ease at first. He suffered much from self-consciousness, and the change for the first few days seemed to have done him more harm than good. During most of that time he was confined to his state-room. On the several occasions he ventured out of it, Mrs. Aston darkened the cabin to suit the condition of his eyes, but he was so oppressed by the fear that he was giving trouble that he soon withdrew to his own quarters. He was painfully conscious of his appearance, too. He thought he must be sorely disfigured, and of all cadets in affliction the least presentable. But his weak and white and wan appearance went straight to the sympathies of everybody; at least everybody but Mrs. Pepper. Upon her it seemed to make but little impression. At first, when he sat in the cabin, if the young ladies happened to glance at him he thought it must be to see if the patches on his head had improved any since their

last look ; and if Mr. and Mrs. Aston chanced to be away making calls in the town it was torture indeed to be left to their care.

Joe did not know what an object of tender interest a sick or wounded cadet may become, especially if his wounds be the wounds of valor. Cupid himself has been known to spring full fledged from a foot thus wounded. And to one less unsophisticated than Joe it might have occurred that nothing in the world could be better than a torpedo to blow a young man right into the heart of a sympathetic girl.

But with Mrs. Pepper he did not get on at all. From the first, he could see that he was a most unwelcome guest to her. She was civil enough to him, but distant and cold. Her unfriendliness made him, during the first of his visit, very uncomfortable if not unhappy. When she condescended to address him, at the very first, he could scarcely reply to her. He had to see her several times, or rather hear her, for his eyes were too weak to bear the peculiar light that invested her person, before he recovered his full powers of speech. He had a feeling that she regarded him as just ripe for piracy ; that he was there to forcibly carry off Katie if he could not do it otherwise. And the question sometimes arose in his mind why it was that in her presence he was so often exercised by a desire to become a young pirate. He wickedly



thought if he was one, the first thing he would do would be to board the *Celeste*, abduct Mrs. Pepper and carry her off to some island where she couldn't get away ; provide her with good attendance and plenty of fruit, and leave her to her own resources for completing a happy existence. But little by little his eyes grew accustomed to the vision of Mrs. Pepper, so that he could look upon her without much blinking ; and he came at last to feel that the worst he would do to her would be to send her on a long visit to some country out of the postal union.

Meanwhile he wrote Schopy a note. He praised his friends warmly, but he said it was hard to be among so many women. "The fact is, Schopy," he said, "they are making a woman of me. The best thing for a wounded cadet to do is to stick it out and get well on board ship, or go to a hospital. When Harry gets back, send him right over to see his cousin. Come yourself. I can't stand this thing alone."

But this note was written on one of his homesick days. He did "stand" it alone, and he stood it very well. When he began to mend never did cadet improve so rapidly as he.

And how did he get on with Katie? Of course he saw a great deal of her. When he had so far recovered as to be able to go about the yacht she accompanied him, and greatly enjoyed his enthu-

siasm over the beautiful Celeste. She read to him, played for him, and was very watchful for his comfort. She planned wonderful excursions for them all when Ned Brentford should come to Bar Harbor (Brentford had changed his mind now that the Daybreak had arrived, and was coming earlier), and in no end of little ways she tried to make him feel at home and to thoroughly enjoy himself. But in it all he could not see that she had any particular interest in him; any interest beyond that which any kind-hearted, impulsive young lady would feel for a friend of her girlhood.

But Joe congratulated himself over the happy turn things had taken. Was not Mrs. Pepper put to rout; were not the Astons as warmly his friends as ever; did he not stand on his old ground with them? And how carefully and well he would maintain his recovered standing; recovered, at least, so far as his own feelings were concerned. His friends should never have reason to regret the confidence they reposed in him. Mrs. Pepper's suspicions should end in mere smoke.

But why would that little spring keep all the time bubbling? Why would it not fill up and cease altogether, quenched by the material he was continually casting into it? No, in spite of all he could do, the spring would keep bubbling.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### MRS. PEPPER'S SCHEME.

BAR HARBOR! Queen of watering places! the supreme delight of the Atlantic coast! Far and wide may we wander and find less delight-someness of sea and shore. We may tax our ingenuity for fine epithets and phrases with which to depict scenes not comparable to those of this lovely resort.

For have we not here a bay the most beautiful from Maine to Florida? Mountains to be mentioned in the same breath with the hills of Sorrento? Mountains, indeed, quite as individual and distinctive as the Sugar Loaf and Corcovado at Rio Janeiro, rivaling in their aggregate strangeness and sublimity the famous view which greets the traveler from the charming heights surrounding the Brazilian capital?

Then, too, the drives! To Schooner Head, Otter Cliffs, the Ovens, Northeast Harbor, the twenty-two-mile drive, the "around the island trip." And the walks! Along the shadow-haunted paths of Duck Brook, leading, as it seems, at every turn

to some sybil's grotto; through wild glens and up mountain gorges, making other famous mountain-sides tame as sand-hills by way of comparison. And, if this were not enough, where, this side of Mars, could be found such indentations of coast, such tunnelling and booming of the sea, such clefts in rocks, such echo-music?

At least, such would have been the thoughts of our young people, Katie and Maud, Ned Brentford, Harry and Joe, had they devoted any particular attention to scenic Bar Harbor. However, three weeks later than the incidents recorded in the last chapter, they had opportunity to ransack the island of Mt. Desert to their hearts' content; thus to acquire as practical a knowledge of the attractions which draw so many thousands every summer to its shores, as they might desire. But, before we can touch upon their doings in this delectable spot, our story must be resumed at about the same point where its thread was dropped.

Joe's stay on board the *Celeste* was destined to be cut short. It happened in this way. He had been but little more than a week with his friends, when trouble broke out between some United States and Dominion fishermen, and the presence of a man-of-war was required at a point farther east. The *Daybreak* was therefore ordered by telegram from Washington to proceed immediately to Eastport. Not knowing how long he might be

detained, Captain Farradale deemed it necessary to recall Joe, and he was directed to rejoin his ship at once.

On the whole, Joe perhaps was not sorry for this occurrence. He was now so far advanced on the road to recovery, thanks to the genial companionship and faithful care of his friends, that he felt he ought not longer to be a burden to them; for he did feel that he was nothing else than a burden to them. Joe could take any amount of trouble for other people, but he could not bear to have other people take trouble for him. He was also anxious to resume his duties. Nothing but absolute disability could have kept him out of his ship at such a time. No doubt the Daybreak's service would be of an highly interesting, if not exciting nature, and what could be better than being in the midst of it?

Then he felt it was an easy way of getting out of the yacht. While he was quite happy in the reflection that he still held his old place in the esteem of his friends, it seemed to him that this in itself should make him more guarded in his intercourse with Katie. Indeed, it appeared to him that he ought to see as little of her as possible. He had become so accustomed to Mrs. Pepper's vigilant eye that she troubled him very little now. But, everything considered, he thought the time had come for him to be gone. He had even

been hoping that the Daybreak might be ordered on a foreign cruise. Then distance would disenchant him with Katie; would enable him to dispossess himself of every feeling toward her but that of a warm and grateful friendship. And meanwhile, if there were anything between Katie and Ned, concerning which his mind was slightly wavering, before he met them again, all would have been settled.

Joe was still ignorant of Miss Maud's engagement to Ned. It happened, however, that two or three days before the Daybreak sailed, drawn by the cordiality of the Astons and the charms of his lady-love, Ned had suddenly put in an appearance at Bar Harbor. And his coming had the effect of greatly mystifying Joe. He did not seem to recognize the headlands of that happy coast where he had pictured Ned and Katie wandering hand in hand together, in what he observed of them now, but on the whole, he maintained his old theory regarding them.

It struck him that Brentford was exceedingly fond of Miss Maud's society, but he was by no means averse to Katie's. He thought it remarkably amiable in Katie to permit her friend to monopolize the one in whom her deepest interest centered; but he accounted for this on the ground that they were her guests, and she wanted them to have a good time. Still it was a phase of

human nature he was not altogether familiar with. But Katie's human nature was so different from that of ordinary mortals. He never once thought that he himself was a guest as well as Brentford; and that it seemed never to have occurred to Katie that Maud's society might be of peculiar interest to him. He might have asked himself why did not she want him to have a good time, too, in the same way. The fact is, things looked strange to him; his ideas of the whole affair had gotten into a good deal of a jumble. But when Joe took a position, he did not like to be driven from it. So he went on putting his observations together, as it were, according to preconceived patterns; and while he felt that he had something quite solid to stand upon, he had to admit that it was a queer kind of mosaic.

When, however, he came to leave the yacht, he was not quite so anxious to go on that foreign cruise; and he also wished that that telegram had been delayed another week. For with the advent of Brentford (and Harry, too, who, as Maud's cousin and Joe's friend, received a hearty welcome on board the *Celeste*), Mt. Desert had begun to put on a different aspect to him. He was quite cheered, as he stepped over the yacht's side, by a remark of Mr. Aston that the trouble was only a codfish flurry.

"It will shortly blow over," said he, "and you'll

soon be back again in your old berth." Which prophecy, indeed, came true; it did soon blow over, and in three weeks time the Daybreak was back again in her old berth alongside the Celeste, with instructions to lie at Bar Harbor — a sufficiently contiguous point to Canadian waters — until further orders.

The horrors of this herring war will have no charm for the reader. No benefit would be derived from a knowledge of the unpleasant details attendant on the purchase of bait. We will therefore remain at Bar Harbor, amusing ourselves as best we can until Joe's return. And the time may as well be spent on board the yacht; for we shall find a welcome there; at least, from everybody but Mrs. Pepper. She, however, is sick and tired of men-of-war, and yachts as well.

"I think it's too bad," said Katie at dinner, on the evening of the day Joe sailed, "that the Daybreak's been ordered away."

"Why so?" inquired Mr. Aston.

"Because it breaks up our buckboard drive; and spoils everything."

A buckboard drive to Somesville was to have celebrated Joe's recovery.

"Can't you go just as well without Bently and Edgerton?" asked Mr. Aston, who knew the young people's disappointment over the breaking up of the party.



"What's a buckboard with only three on it?" said Katie, whose heart had been set on hiring the most monstrous buckboard in Bar Harbor for the occasion.

"Some things do go off better with a crowd," returned Mr. Aston, smiling.

"And a buckboard drive is one of them," put in Katie.

"I could never see anything in buckboards," said Mrs. Pepper, in her usually crisp manner

"You and I, Sarah, are getting on," remarked Mrs. Aston. "We must have our springs and cushions." (Mr. Aston sometimes addressed Mrs. Pepper in this familiar way.)

"As for that," rejoined Mrs. Pepper, frowning slightly, "I feel as young as I ever did; and goodness knows there's spring enough to a buckboard. But I can't see, for the life of me, what pleasure people find jolting over this island on buckboards. It's as senseless as paddling around it in canoes."

"Oh! that's delightful," exclaimed Katie. "A gondola is nothing to it!"

The day before Ned and Harry had paddled the young ladies to Anemone Cave and back in a canoe.

"Well, I don't like the free and easy ways of this island; and what's at the bottom of it all?" continued Mrs. Pepper.

"Well, what is at the bottom of it all?" asked

Mr. Aston, perfectly willing to hear Mrs. Pepper's views.

"Buckboards and canoes," answered Mrs. Pepper, with emphasis.

Somehow or other, this season Bar Harbor presented to Mrs. Pepper a very tender moral and social surface, into which she seldom failed to insert the sting of some pretty sharp remarks.

"Nobody goes on buckboards but hotel people," she added.

"I think you must be mistaken, Sarah," pleasantly observed Mrs. Aston. "The last time we were out driving we met the Baymeaths, the Miz-zentops, the Lookouts and the Homewoods, all out on buckboards."

"Besides, I know some other worthy people," remarked Mr. Aston, with a smile, "who go buck-board driving. And they used to be hotel people, too."

"Speaking of hotels," laughed Ned, "makes me think of a funny—oh! I beg pardon," he apologized, as he saw he had cut off a remark of Mrs. Pepper's.

"Please go on," said she, with one of her far-away looks.

"Of a funny experience I had at my hotel the other day," continued Ned. "I went to my room, and, as usual, found no towels. I asked a chamber-maid out in the hall if she wouldn't please get

me some. She said the lady that took care of that room was out making her afternoon calls, and that I couldn't have any till she got back, as she had the keys."

A smile touched every countenance but Mrs. Pepper's.

"But that wasn't all," said Ned. "I then went down to the office and asked for some, and the clerk handed me a couple."

"And did you take them to your room yourself?" asked Maud, much amused.

"O, yes! and I met a man on the stairs, who asked me if I wasn't the hotel barber."

Equanimity restored, Mr. Aston proceeded to comment on the danger resulting to Bar Harbor from overcrowding. He feared it might become like Long Branch or Coney Island.

"We found that out last summer, didn't we, papa?" said Katie. "Don't you remember how we had to look for rooms, and what one woman said to us?"

"I don't recall it," said Mr. Aston, as Katie paused an instant.

"‘I can eat yer,' said she, ‘but I can't sleep yer.' And what you heard the man say in the office about the table?" she went on.

"O, yes!" replied Mr. Aston. "He complained that the table was even worse than the year before. ‘That can't be possible,' answered the proprietor.

But it's a wonder to me," continued Mr. Aston, putting in a good word for the hotels, "that they do as well as they do, with such armies as swoop down upon them in a single day. They eat up every green thing."

"I should say so," remarked Mrs. Pepper, "from the wall of tin cans that surrounds the place."

Mrs. Pepper now had her say about the hotels. She hated the very sight of them. And there was hardly anything she so much dreaded as the possibility of being taken for one of the thousands who swarm on their piazzas. She would no more have stepped upon a buckboard in front of one of them—had necessity compelled her to resort to that obnoxious mode of conveyance—than she would have called at one of the fashionable cottages in her wrapper. She had gone so far even as to name some of them. One she called the *Modiste*, another the *Silk and Ribbon*, and still another, where a convention of teachers were stopping, the *Common School*. So the remarks she now made touched the seam of her old ideas very evenly.

But the hotels of Bar Harbor, and the people, and the climate, and the sunsets, and the sunrises—if Mrs. Pepper may be supposed to know that Bar Harbor indulges in sunrises—and numberless other things, tasteful or distasteful to her,

she didn't care to talk about now. Another subject stood foremost in her mind's eye. She had barely reached the main track of it, in her remarks upon buckboards and canoes, when she was switched off by Ned's incident of the towels.

It is easy to guess what this subject was. Had not Joe Bently that very morning left the *Celeste*? Was not the smoke of the *Daybreak* still to be seen, faintly visible on the far-off horizon? And was not Mrs. Pepper anxiously hoping that the *Daybreak* might not return to Bar Harbor, though she had but little doubt that she would do so? And last of all, had she not listened to the animated discussions of plans for excursions, and the thousand and one things that would have taken place had not the *Daybreak* been ordered away, and that would take place should she soon return?

Mrs. Pepper deprecated all this enthusiasm on the part of the young people for Bar Harbor, and especially their fondness for buckboards and canoes. To her mind, Bar Harbor, at this time, should receive nothing but dispraise; and buckboards and canoes were to her an appropriation of what should have remained the unmolested expedients of agricultural and aboriginal wayfaring. [Wayfaring was her word.]

In truth, Mrs. Pepper was out of fellowship with nearly everything at Bar Harbor. And she was so simply on account of our young people.

Their love for Bar Harbor would keep them together; and what she wanted just now was the distance of not less than ninety degrees of the earth's surface between two of them at least. So when Ned and Maud expressed the wish that the Daybreak might not be long detained, because they desired so much to see more of Harry and Joe, she was prompt with the interrogative, "Why should the Daybreak return to Bar Harbor?"

"Simply because Captain Farradale wants to," said Mr. Aston.

"What in the world is there for a man-of-war to do here!" exclaimed Mrs. Pepper. "Why don't she stay where she is?"

"What for?" propounded Mr. Aston.

"What for? To protect our fisheries, of course."

"Our fisheries!" laughed Mr. Aston, emphasizing the pronoun.

"They're too fond of spending their summers at Newport and Bar Harbor, anyway. If I was Secretary of the Navy it would be different, I can tell you."

"Yes," said Mr. Aston, smiling at Mrs. Pepper's vehemence, "I've no doubt it would be different. You'd send them to the North Pole in winter, and to the West Indies in summer. But this isn't a scurvy and yellow fever administration."

"I'd give them something to do," said the relentless Mrs. Pepper.

"Something to do!" exclaimed Maud, indignant at Mrs. Pepper's unkind and unjust opposition to the Navy. "You ought to hear what my cousin Harry says about it."

"What does he say?"

"He says it's the hardest kind of a life, and there's very little to look forward to."

"He's right in that," returned Mrs. Pepper. "There's nothing to look forward to but small salaries."

"It's a highly honorable profession," said Katie, "if the salaries are small. And poverty isn't the worst thing in the world."

"But poverty isn't to be chosen, my dear, when wealth can be had just as easily," said Mrs. Pepper, with great deliberation, looking straight at the speaker.

But her remark was lost upon Katie.

"If we can have wealth, and choose poverty, we fly in the face of Providence," Mrs. Pepper went on.

"Who is she hitting now?" thought Katie to herself. "She is always hitting somebody. Oh! I know; she's thinking how foolish Joe was not to leave the Navy and become a naval architect, or study law."

"I should say that, on the whole," remarked Mrs. Aston, "it's better that officers of the Navy should receive rather small salaries."

"Why?" asked Mrs. Pepper.

"Because their profession doesn't belong to the money-making professions. And it makes them all the manlier, braver men."

"I never heard that before," said Mrs. Pepper.

"You wouldn't present that as indisputable evidence, would you," said Mr. Aston, good naturedly, "that it can't be so?"

As this was not intended for sarcasm, Mrs. Pepper did not take offense. But catching at Mrs. Aston's incidental allusion to bravery, she rather unfortunately, for herself, took occasion to bring out her ideas of courage for their periodic airing. The one upon which she most prided herself — the silk-lined, ermine-fringed idea, so to speak — was, that courage is nothing more than a natural impulse or instinct. People, she said, should no more boast of it than of the sense of touch or taste. And this time she did not stop until every stitch and thread of her knowledge on the subject was hung out before her listeners.

"Was it natural impulse," asked Maud, stirred to argument more by Mrs. Pepper's manner than by her words, "that caused Joe Bently to pitch that shell overboard?"

Harry had told her the incident, and Mr. Aston had heard it from Captain Farradale.

"It was nothing more!" was the reply, in a rather withering tone.



"I should think," laughed Ned, "his natural impulse would have been to run."

"Yes," said Mr. Aston; "my friend, Dr. Rogers, of Bar Harbor, who was an officer of the Navy during the war, did the same thing. And he told me his impulse was to go out over the flying jib-boom."

"Was it natural impulse, that time at the Acquidneck?" said Mrs. Aston, smiling and looking slyly at Mrs. Pepper.

"You're always throwing that up to me," said Mrs. Pepper, with extreme rigidity of countenance and frigidity of tone.

Two years before, the Astons and Mrs. Pepper had spent a month at the Hotel Acquidneck in Newport. One day while they were at dinner a slight fire broke out on the roof of the building. Natural impulse had sent them all scampering to their rooms to save their effects; and the alarm meanwhile not abating, natural impulse had evicted Mrs. Pepper from her room without her effects. Or, at least, with only a crochet needle and a ball of yarn to show for the visit. And it may be remarked that these were not her most valuable effects, either. Her conduct on that occasion made natural impulse a rather doubtful quantity in the minds of her friends whenever she attempted to show that it was the principal ingredient of courage.

Dinner over, the party went up on deck — the gentlemen to smoke their cigars, and the ladies, with one exception, to enjoy the splendors of the evening.

It is easy to see that Mrs. Pepper was as unrecconciled to Joe as ever. And the outlook to her was now a very serious one. Our naval cadet had excited her gravest fear for Katie. His modest, gentle demeanor, she felt, would do more toward winning the young girl than any audacious assault he might attempt upon her heart. So quiet, so sensible, so unpresuming had he been, so careful lest he should give some little trouble, that when he departed she saw that he held a firmer place in his friends' regard than ever. He had not at all deported himself as she had intimated it would be a naval cadet's nature to do — to act as though the yacht belonged to him. On the contrary, his behavior was such as to show Mrs. Pepper that he much preferred to have remained on board the Daybreak.

To sum up, Mrs. Pepper's woman's eye saw that a handsome, manly young fellow like Joe Bently would not have to go about the world obliged to beg or to force his way into the good graces of young ladies. She had sniffed danger the first time she saw him; danger to which Katie's parents seemed painfully obtuse. As we have seen, she had attempted to nip this danger in the bud,

and now, to her chagrin, it had broken out into a very strong shoot, which would not be nipped. Nothing she had done thus far had been of any avail in keeping Joe away, and she felt if the Day-break came back her scheme would be in danger.

For Mrs. Pepper had a scheme. And on account of this scheme she had gone on laying her lash upon Joe over the shoulders of the whole Navy. And her hostility to the innocent cadet was no more a freak of her nature than the covering of its eggs in the sand is a freak of an ostrich's nature. Her scheme, it is true, was not remarkably original; nor was it developed with much wisdom. It was, indeed, a very shallow scheme. But such as it was, it accounts for Mrs. Pepper's attitude toward Joe.

It was simply this: to make a match between Katie and a young man of her own choosing. This young man she had found in the person of a friend in Providence. Between this friend, whom she was fond of designating "the rising young lawyer," and Katie she was anxious to bring about a meeting. She had hoped it might be accomplished the present season, but had been disappointed. She had intimated to Mrs. Aston that it would add greatly to her pleasure if she were allowed to invite her young friend to Bar Harbor, with the promise that he should be entertained on board the yacht. But never having met the young

gentleman, Mrs. Aston declined the honor that his coming would have thrust upon her. Mrs. Pepper then undertook to persuade Mr. Aston to spend a month with the Celeste in Narragansett Bay. But as he did not know the supreme good Mrs. Pepper had in contemplation for his beloved Katie, he remained at Bar Harbor, and the "rising young lawyer" took his outing at Narragansett Pier and Rocky Point.

And this is why Mrs. Pepper did not like Joe Bently.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### THAT ANNAPOLIS GIRL.

JOE returned to Bar Harbor in a different frame of mind from that in which he had left it. He came back fully resolved upon spending very little time away from the Daybreak. He had been able to devote so little attention to his studies, on account of the distractions of ship-life, that he now felt it was high time for him to resume them. As surely as the earth would make her revolutions, so surely would his examination come in the no distant future.

And what if he should fail at that time! Never thereafter could he look his friends in the face. The agricultural development of Aroostook County would thenceforth be his life mission. So this, he concluded, formed an excellent excuse for remaining on board ship. Would not this be killing two birds with one stone? Katie would be kept out of his mind, and he would be preparing for his examination.

And the canoes might glance about the harbor

and the buckboards rattle over the hills, the tops of the mountains might call to him and the caves might lift up their voices — all the grand and beautiful things of Bar Harbor might unite to draw him away from his loved studies, yet he would regard them as sirens all, attempting to lure him upon the rocks of professional disaster.

These were the high-flown phrases which bore him in his purpose so very far aloft, that he felt nothing could get him down to the idle, pleasure-seeking habits into which he charged himself as having been in danger of falling. No, he told Harry before leaving Passamaquoddy Bay that he was going back to Bar Harbor to get in some solid work, and nothing should divert him from it. Which statement amused Harry.

But when he was back in Bar Harbor, and Ned and Maud and Katie had been on board the Daybreak, and he and Harry and Schopy had been on board the Celeste, he discovered that his resolution was like a very light, untimely snow. It couldn't stand the social tropics it had fallen into. So the Daybreak had not swung to her anchor forty-eight hours before Joe was hand in glove with the young people in all their plans for taking in Bar Harbor and the places around the bay. Alas for good resolutions !

And these young people ! What a congenial party they made ! How in accord with one

another — an anomalous state of things — in just the things to be done! And as time goes on, how clannish and cliquish they become, attracting much attention as, bent on their own purposes, they often pass along the buckboard and piazza-flanked sidewalks of the village. Visitors came to notice and to admire these exclusive, handsome young people, so apparently contented and happy in one another, and so indifferent to the fashionable world around.

Yes, Joe's good resolution, true to the instinct of all good resolutions, had migrated. All the time he and Harry could now get off duty was spent with their young friends of the *Celeste*. "Of course the *Daybreak* will be here only a short time," Joe said to himself, "and I might just as well enjoy Bar Harbor while I have it."

And so he was all ready for every excursion as it came. The only one to find fault with this was Mrs. Pepper. It seemed to her that the picnic basket was never out of hand. But what could she do? Her only alternative was to go with them when she was invited; but that was not often. She could not see, moreover, why the cadets were not kept on board ship more.

"They'll make pretty officers," she said to Mrs. Aston; "off every day or two."

She had now fixed her attention on the discipline of the Navy, particularly that part of it relat-

ing to the highest efficiency of cadets. Beginning with the broad subject of naval discipline, the combined wisdom of boards of admirals and committees of legislators, her ideas had narrowed down to just one feature of it; namely, that of restricted liberty. Naval cadets went ashore altogether too much; that is, two naval cadets did — Joe and Harry.

“Why,” said she one day to Mrs. Aston, “that green little Schopy, as they call him, will make a better officer than either of them.”

But the sight-seeing, the walks, the drives, the sails, the “rocking,” the “canoeing,” the “lawn-ing,” went right on; and everybody but Joe took Mrs. Pepper’s eccentricities and perversities good naturedly. He would have quite forgotten her, had she not apprised him of her presence on the stage of his affairs by giving him a private dig now and then. But for the most part life went on quite happily with him.

What, indeed, could be more delightful than the climbs up Newport, the scramblings, the hold-ings on, the helping Katie up the steep places, and the constant watchfulness for steep places to help her up! All this was delightful. And how this most glorious season Bar Harbor had ever seen was giving him tone and buoyancy. The accident on the torpedo expedition had pulled him down a good deal. Was not this a good enough



reason, he said to himself, for being so much away from the ship? And what exhilaration he felt as he stood at the summit of Newport or Green Mountain gazing around him; upon the ocean dotted with islands, specked with sails, fringed with harbors, bays and straits; yes, and bearing upon its calm bosom Katie's "golden lily of a yacht." For Joe had learned this name from Katie, and had imbibed from her the affectionate interest in the yacht indicated by the name.

And as he and Katie sometimes wandered away from the rest of the party, how really enthusiastic he became over sea-gardens, polyps, anemones, the scratches upon the rocks, made by amphibious monsters ages before the flood, and endless other things. For did not all these things excite the enthusiastic interest of his young companion? How pleasant it was, also, to listen to the distant music of her echoing voice around the shores of Echo Lake! And when she paused from her sketching, or her studies of rocks and shells and plants — for Katie was no idler — to talk to him, how little he said, but how he treasured her words in his memory!

Joe now allowed himself to wander away short distances with Katie. It seemed quite the natural thing to do. They were quite the boy and girl again and he did not blame himself for this. Over and over again as he lay thinking about it in his

hammock he said to himself that it could not be wrong. To be sure it was not doing as he had intended to do. In the bitterness of his heart over Mrs. Pepper, since he had found that she had not destroyed the friendship of the Astons for him, he had promised himself to see as little of Katie as would be consistent with the cordial relations he held to the family.

If he should leave off now, he said to himself, they would certainly think something was in the wind. Why shouldn't he enjoy the advantages the season had laid at his very feet? This might be the last opportunity he would ever have to enjoy the society of his friends. Another year and the Daybreak might be locked fast in polar ice. And if in it all he was thrown a good deal with Katie, it would be merely incidental to a summer's outing.

And he had put away the idea, too, that his being so much with Katie might cause her to lose her heart to him. This was a height of egotism to which he could not rise. He was well aware of Mr. Aston's views respecting the Navy. And he was satisfied that Mrs. Pepper had done all she could to bring it into ill-repute as a domestic institution. This, with the feeling that Katie had no interest in him beyond a strong desire to see him get on in the world, made it seem quite right to enjoy with her the pleasures of Bar Harbor. In

truth, he was surprised to find how full of reasons his mind was for doing so. He got to be quite proud of the fact, too, that he could be so much with Katie and be so true to what he regarded his duty to her parents. And there was also a little feeling of satisfaction in it; he was all the while getting even with Mrs. Pepper. Were not things going swimmingly with our cadet?

Not so swimmingly as they seemed. For he did not at all succeed in suppressing his feeling for Katie. His secret gave him many a heart-ache. Then he thought sometimes that his seaside devotion to Katie would not be understood by Mr. Aston, if he came to know about it. Somebody might construct a little romance out of the monopoly he and Katie had been seen on various occasions to set up in each other's society. Their being so much together might even cause a little pleasantry on board the yacht. Young people, he knew, are quite unsafe in such matters. His chum Harry was utterly untrustworthy. While he would not for the world have told Katie what was in his heart without her father's full permission, how would her father know what he would do, accorded so many privileges of friendship? At any rate, if he should receive a hint that he and Katie were so much together, the biggest kind of an iceberg would thenceforth exist between the Daybreak and the Celeste.

It would have indeed been a terrible blow to Joe to have been thus misunderstood by Mr. Aston. It was hard enough to endure Mrs. Pepper's frowns, but if Mr. and Mrs. Aston should frown, too, it would be insupportable. So once in a while he said to himself, "This thing must stop right here." Nevertheless, it did not stop.

It may be interesting to note how this exceedingly pleasant relation between Joe and Katie was brought about. It was such a tremendous step, its history is important. It came about in the simplest way in the world. One night, shortly after the Daybreak's return, as Joe was standing Swem's watch for him, Harry joined him for a bit of a promenade. The cadets were often thus together. Harry had just returned from a buckboard drive, and was in rather a playful humor. He began the conversation with the endearing remark, "Joey B., you're a drivelling idiot."

Joe was accustomed to this conversational preface from Harry, and simply observed with a smile, "Well, what have I done this time?"

"Done! What haven't you done? Your goose is cooked with Miss Aston."

"How is that?" asked Joe, laughing.

"Schopy did it for you."

"Well, if I had a goose to cook, I don't know of anybody I'd rather have cook it than Schopy."

Joe had taken Swem's duty for that day that he

might enjoy the ride to the Ovens with the young people. Harry had gone ashore early to make arrangements for the buckboard, and Swem had surprised him by turning up in Joe's place.

"You ought to have known enough to have kept Schopy on board," Harry went on. "He was very chummy with Miss Aston."

"We mustn't go back on our poor old Schopy," said Joe. "He ought to have a little of this cream."

"Well, he hunted shells and made sketches with her all day."

"What were the subjects of his sketches?"

"One of them was Joey B. out on the foreyard chasing the Aztec. But, Joey, the shortest cut to your case is — to iterate the oft-repeated designation — 'you're a drivelling idiot'."

"I can't see the application to what I've done to-day."

"Joey," said Harry, "why don't you step in there?"

"What do you mean?" asked Joe, in considerable surprise.

"I mean, why don't you marry Katie Aston? That is, when you get ready."

"Harry," said Joe, very seriously, "I don't like you to talk in this way about Miss Aston."

"Well, she's dead in love with you, or would be if you'd let her."

"Really, Harry, it's wrong to talk in this trifling way. Under no circumstances would I have the right to think of Miss Aston as you suggest."

"Right, Joey? All is fair in love and war, you know."

"Please, Harry, never refer to this matter again. I'm proud of Miss Aston's friendship, but we can never be any more than friends."

"That's why you're an idiot," continued the imperturbable Harry.

"Harry, I can't permit you to go on in this trifling manner. It's unfair to Miss Aston and to Brentford."

At this Harry laid hold of a shroud and laughed so heartily that Joe feared he would wake the crew sleeping in their hammocks below. He kept it up so long that Joe asked him in a tone of displeasure what there was so funny in what he had said.

"Joey," said the irrepressible Harry, "you excite me to mirth. You are not a citizen of the world. You are the best boy in Sunday School. I fear your early demise."

At this Joe promptly evinced his displeasure by a very caustic remark.

"Do you mean to tell me you don't know about Brentford?" asked Harry.

"What about him? I've always suspected that he and Miss Aston were something more than friends."

"And that's the extent of your discovery?" said the tormenting Harry.

"What!" almost gasped Joe; "are they really engaged?"

"Well, Joey," said Harry, "your case is hopeless. I give you up. You haven't the perception of a jelly-fish."

Joe only stared at Harry.

"If it wasn't a family secret I'd tell you something."

"A family secret! what do you mean?" asked the puzzled Joe.

"Has it never occurred to you, Joey, that there's another girl around—a prettier girl, too, than Katie Aston?"

Joe was getting excited. "Do you mean to say that Brentford and Miss Edgerton" —

"I don't mean to say anything. I never tell family secrets, Joey."

Joe's walk was now anything but a military tread. His pace had so quickened that the ring of his steps could be heard fore and aft. Harry was trying to keep up with him, chuckling to himself all the while over his excitement. Joe now saw, as he paced on altogether oblivious of his friend's presence, what he might have easily discovered during his stay on board the yacht. But his Medo-Persian intellect bound him to another theory.

"Well, Joey," said Harry at last, drawing a long breath, "you've got your walking tactics on, and I'll go below."

"Oh! I beg pardon," said Joe, "please don't go yet."

"You're much preoccupied, Joey, and you'll be better without me. I'm glad you're coming to your senses. But do you know what I'd do, if I were in your place?"

"No," said Joe.

"If I had your swing with the Astons, I'd have a rattling good time at Bar Harbor this summer," remarked enthusiastic Harry.

"I am having a good enough time."

"Well, if you call moping on board ship, and fighting shy of a girl like Katie Aston having a good time, then you're surely having a magnificent time."

"I don't see what I can do more, with all the work we have."

"You can take your day off when it comes, and not do Schopy's duty. But go in, Joey, for that little girl. She'll be a hard one to land; but I guess you can do it, if you employ the proper tactics." And Harry dropped below, wondering if Joe had a particle of enthusiasm for Katie.

Harry had succeeded in demolishing one stronghold of Joe's difficulty. But plenty of other works remained, wall within wall. Joe fixed it up in this



way. One strong wall, was Mr. Aston's evident dislike of the Navy, as we have seen, as a domestic institution. Another, like unto it, was Katie's probable sympathy with her father on the same subject. It seemed that in this affair there was nothing but walls about him, and he felt a good deal like a prisoner in a fort. He had a certain freedom, so to speak, of the parade ground, but he was always under guard. Did not his own sense of duty to Katie's parents seem to follow him about continually, as under arms? And way up in the most conspicuous watch-tower was Mrs. Pepper, her vigilant eye always upon him, ready at the slightest movement toward escape, or in other words, toward Katie's heart, to relentlessly pick him off.

But Harry noticed the very next time they were all out together, that Joe actually fell full twenty feet behind the rest of the party, with the evident intention of being alone with Katie. Harry went so far as to celebrate the event with a broad grin at his cousin. This first loitering was prefatory of a perceptible increase of distance, until it often became as many as a thousand yards — a tremendous range for a bashful cadet.

It is hard to tell what Joe talked about on these occasions, as he was non-committal except in a few of their conversations. But one subject on which he succeeded in making many diffuse and

inconsistent remarks, was the weather. One evening he delivered to Katie a few thoughts on the moon. Another time he was successful in making it fairly evident to her understanding that the sea was blue. It is not necessary to follow Joe's subtle processes of reasoning to arrive at those facts in nature of which, for a time, he made such copious use. But it is certain that the first week or two his conversation never wandered away from natural phenomena.

One day they had all climbed, with great difficulty, to the top of one of the high hills of Mt. Desert, wearing the homely name of Nubble. Off a little distance from where they had taken lunch, Joe found a prettily perched seat on which Katie could sit and feast her eyes upon the view before her to her heart's content. It was at a point where one of the grandest of natural panoramic views received no interruption. In the foreground was a hill with beautifully sloping sides, its feet laved by the waters of two pretty lakes. Beyond was a wide display of intermingled forests and farms, cottages, both of the old and the new Mt. Desert, headlands and islands, the whole, save here and there an open water-space, bordered by a purple fringe of circling hills.

So crowded was this vision with nooks and corners of beauty, that it seemed to Joe he could let his eyes wander among them the live long day.



JOE STOOD BY AS USUAL, LIKE A WOODEN APOLLO.



That is, if Katie could spend that much time in the same occupation. Somehow or other this was one of Joe's melancholy days. He was very quiet, and had given Katie the impression that something was wrong with him. She had been talking with him lately about his life plans, and had not found him nearly so frank as might have been expected from one in whose success in life they all felt such a warm interest. At times, indeed, Joe seemed rather sad, and Katie had been trying to account for it in her own mind. She wondered if his ambition outran the life he had chosen. Then she recalled Dawson's allusion to some worry that was on his mind. And in perfect innocence, she thought — and she had been thinking this all along — that perhaps some Annapolis girl had forgotten all about him in the absorption of some new cadet. She had heard of the transitory nature of Annapolis heart affections. At any rate, she plainly saw, in common parlance, that Joe wasn't easy in his mind.

She took up her sketch-book, and commenced sketching. Joe stood by as usual, like a wooden Apollo, saying not a word. The other young people were chatting and laughing, off at the now customary distance of a thousand yards.

"Joe," said Katie, while her fingers flew over the page, "why do you make me do all the talking? I can listen and work, too."

"Well, I don't know," laughed Joe, "unless, perhaps, it's because I like to hear sensible people talk."

"I might return the compliment," said Katie, smiling.

"I wish I were able to accept it."

"Oh! if anything, you're too sensible, Joe."

"This is the first time I ever suspected it," said Joe, with a laugh.

"I mean," continued Katie, "you're too soberly sensible."

"And you think I ought only to be sensibly sober?"

"That's it," returned Katie, with a smile.

"I don't wonder you think me stupid," Joe went on in a tone of depression; "I'm always moping."

"Oh! no, indeed, Joe; I don't find you stupid. Only, if you'll pardon me, you don't seem so buoyant and light-hearted as you used to."

Joe got very red, and said he was sorry to hear that.

"Are you disappointed in the Navy?" Katie went on.

"Well, no; not much. I can't say, however, that it promises a great deal."

"How so?" inquired Katie.

"Promotions are so slow. It reminds me of a jam of logs."

"What a queer comparison!" observed Katie.

"You see," explained Joe, "those the farthest along — the admirals, commodores, captains, and so forth — have got to be sort of pried up and moved on, before the last in the jam — the cadets — can budge."

Katie laughed at this way of putting it, and said, "Sometimes a jam of logs goes with a rush, you know."

"O, yes! that's what we are hoping for," replied Joe. "For Congress to break up the jam."

"Do Aunt Pepper's affectionate allusions to the Navy trouble you, Joe?" Katie continued.

"Not very much," answered Joe, getting a good deal redder.

"Well, she and papa are right in one thing."

"What is that?" asked Joe, trying to disguise his interest.

"It affords almost no opportunity for making a name."

"We have to take our chances on that."

"Mr. Edgerton says, unless there's a war, naval officers will all degenerate into mere Government employés."

"I hope it won't be so bad as all that."

"I trust something will turn up, for your sake, Joe; we are all so anxious for you to do well in life."

"That protégé business," thought Joe to him-

self. "They're only interested in me because they've helped me along."

"The worst thing about the Navy," said Katie, musing over her sketch, "is the separations it imposes."

"They are rather long," Joe managed to say.

"What's the longest time officers are absent from their friends, Joe?"

"Seldom longer than three years."

"How dreadful! Won't Mr. Bloomsbury see those beautiful children for three years?"

Katie had seen pictures of the Hercules, the Ajax and the Superb, one day on the Daybreak.

"Not if we leave the home station," answered Joe.

"Well, I'm beginning to think the Navy isn't so much of a place, after all."

"Our old Schopy has been giving it a setting out, I guess," remarked Joe, trying to smile.

"O, yes!" laughed Katie; "he was very dismal, but highly amusing. He told me that you do not like it much better than he does. I thought you were wedded to it."

"I am," said Joe. "I mean to stay in it, and hope for the better."

"I hope you will, I'm sure," Katie went on. "I have always thought it was the best place for you."

"There it is again," thought Joe. "It's the



poor but worthy young man getting a boost in life from his rich friends. He's a sort of investment to them. They put so much charity and good-will into him, and thereafter their only interest is to see how large a dividend he can declare to their pride of generosity from the success of his life."

But Katie kept on. "Joe," said she, "Dawson said you were worried about something. Is it anything I may know about?"

If Katie had looked up from her sketch, upon which she was now putting the finishing touches, she would have discovered that Joe's face resembled the sun seen through smoked glass. Joe thought of the poor but worthy young man again. And he said to himself that those who have helped such an one, forever after think they hold a mortgage on him, body and soul. "Why," he declared to himself, in the intensity of his feeling, "they think they have the right to put their fingers into the vest pockets of his very troubles!"

But here was Katie waiting an answer. He saw that she had surmised nothing in regard to herself from what Dawson had said. She must, however, have a reply. By a singular coincidence, he thought of an Annapolis girl, but he could not tell the barefaced untruth which this would involve. And how could he tell the truth? This wouldn't do at all. The protégé idea had now gotten rooted in his mind. This in itself, he said,

was sufficient reason for not revealing his secret. And over and above this, were Katie's evident simplicity and the principle of honor which he cherished toward Mr. Aston. Taking into account everything that had passed in Joe's mind, neither heaven nor earth could have moved him now to tell Katie the truth. Well, what did he do? Do? Why, he just laid hold of the first dangling rope of evasion which dropped down into his thoughts, and by means of it, helped himself out of the tight place.

As so many are tempted to do, when placed in similar situations, Joe told what was strictly true in itself, but out of all connection with the real truth.

In much confusion he managed to say he had worried some about his eyes. He thought at first it was going hard with them. Dawson, he said, took his little troubles to heart even more than he did his own.

It seemed rather strange to Katie that she had received the impression in the interview already described, that Joe was on watch when Dawson tried to comfort him. And how could he have been on watch, and in the cabin blindfolded and otherwise surgically treated, all at the same time? In a word, it was very strange that he should have been worrying about his eyes before they were injured. But Katie never could get the doings on

board a man-of-war into any sort of congruous relations in her mind.

However, as just then the rest of the party came up for a start home, she concluded that Joe's little anachronism was all on account of that Annapolis girl.

## CHAPTER XX.

### A CABIN TEMPEST.

AS Joe walked down the hill with the young people, carrying the lunch basket in one hand and Katie's wrap and sketch-book in the other, he seemed disposed to let Ned and Harry do all the talking. And when they had reached the buckboard waiting for them some distance from the foot of the hill, he committed Katie to Harry's care, on the back seat of the vehicle. This was reversing the order in which they had come. Joe had then occupied the back seat with Katie, and Harry had sat with the driver, the one other seat, of course, falling to Ned and Maud. Joe declared that it was not the fair thing for him to want the best seat both ways.

So while his young friends chattered away on the seats behind him, he kept up a very busy thinking. Occasionally he made a remark to the driver, but it was merely for the sake of seeming social that he did so; the thought uppermost in Joe's mind was, that the Astons regarded him as a

poor, but worthy young man. He was their beneficiary. As the poor, but worthy young man, they wanted him to do well in the world, and this was why they permitted him to derive what encouragement he could from their hospitality and friendship. All the social privileges he was receiving at their hands were simply evidences of their helpful disposition toward him.

As Joe thought it all over, perched up with the driver on the buckboard, that poor, but worthy young man cut a most forlorn and dismal figure in his own meditations. He could not rid himself of him ; like Banquo's ghost, he would not down. He haunted Joe's mind ; he thrust himself into every thought ; his pitiful face framed itself in every meditation. And Katie's innocent little remark was the all-powerful wand that had called up this "poor, but worthy young man."

Yes, our cadet was very proud, and in his present state of mind, very sensitive. Katie's remark to which he had attached such meaning cut him to the quick. He now wished that nobody had taken any interest in him at all—that he had been left to carve his own way in the world. Then he could have carried a free lance. Then he would have been at liberty to tell Katie that he loved her, if fortune had thrown her in his way. But now he would have to hold his secret as tightly to his heart as the Spartan boy did the fox to his

body. And his secret, too, was eating into the very vitals of his happiness.

And Katie's unconsciousness of her closeness to the all-absorbing subject with him filled him with surprise. That a little light had not penetrated her mind from the flash of Mrs. Pepper's suspicions seemed incredible. It was clear to him that Mrs. Pepper regarded him as a danger upon which Katie might stumble, and even a fire-fly emittance of warning could have put her on her guard. But from the appearance of things there had not been even this much light. And he had thought that Mrs. Pepper kept a big reflector turned on him all the time.

But Katie had talked on all unsuspecting. This he emphasized to himself over and over again. If Katie had suspected his love for her she would never have gone on cutting all around the nerve of his secret as she had done that afternoon. Had she not been perfectly ingenuous he would have been forced to take some things she had said as a timely hint that the Navy filled no place whatever in her ambition for her own future. But if she had known anything about his mind toward her he kept repeating to himself she would not have done this. She was a girl of altogether too fine instincts to do anything of the kind. If she had had any hints to give she would have waited for some hint from him before giving them.

For as we have seen, Joe had given her no hint. In her presence he had kept all the windows of his heart carefully closed. Not a word or look had been sent therefrom to see if some little branch of hope might not be brought back to him. No, it was plain to be seen that Katie knew no more of his mind in this affair than a boy knows of the mathematical uses of  $x$ ,  $y$  and  $z$ , who has never studied algebra.

So Joe rode on making a good deal out of a very little ; beholding men as trees walking. Once in a while he turned round and uttered a few words to his companions. He tried hard to speak cheerful words, and apposite to the occasion, but he failed in both respects. He was glad when the village was reached. He carried Katie's things down to the Celeste's boat and handed in the fair young mistress. But in spite of all he could do, on the way thither he was unable to talk with her without evident embarrassment ; and his little duties as escort were done, as it seemed to him, with painful awkwardness. He thought he detected a slight absent-mindedness in her manner, too ; this, however, was scarcely perceptible, and was a mere passing thought with him. But as she held out her hand to him as he was turning to go away, the kind look she gave him went straight to his heart. Still this was not new to him ; for Katie had a kind look for everybody.

The gig safely started for the Celeste, Joe and Harry made their way to the Daybreak. Harry saw that Joe had something on his mind, but this had ceased to be phenomenal, and he made no remark upon it. Yet Joe's movements throughout the evening did not pass him unnoticed. Joe seemed decidedly revolutionary as respected his intentions. He behaved like one who is forming new plans, going to turn over a new leaf. One of the things he did was to get out a number of his old text books and carefully arrange them on the table. A glance showed Harry that they represented three great departments of human knowledge: language, mathematics and physics. Then he got down a calendar, and seemed absorbed in dates. Out of this abstraction came, in due course, a well-filled sheet of paper which looked to Harry very much like a time-form. After a little Harry began to quiz him. He learned that the paper Joe had been at work upon was in reality a time-form, and that he was going to spend the next week in preparing for his examination, two years ahead. He said it would get round before he knew it, and if any dropping was to be done he didn't propose to be one of the dropped. Harry affronted him by remarking that it was rather bad to be dropped in anything.

Joe said, furthermore, he supposed he should have to spend a part of the week after at his home;



his sisters had been teasing him to come. Harry admitted that this ought to be done. The exigencies of the Service were liable, any time, he said, to put their homes out of reach for a number of years, and a cadet needed all the stores of home-influence he could take in to carry abroad with him in the world. Joe said very little during the evening, but to every remark Harry assented with, "Why, yes." "To be sure." "O, certainly! by all means"; or, "it's an excellent idea." And by the time they swung themselves into their hammocks, Joe felt very much tried with his mess-mate Harry. And between him and that poor, but worthy young man, he spent several hours looking out of his hammock at the corrugated surface of a lantern.

It is to be wondered at that Katie, who has been, as it were, right under the eaves of Mrs. Pepper's mind, has not received the information that Joe Bently is hovering about the *Celeste* with piratical intent. In Portland, so it seemed to us, Mrs. Pepper's liveliest suspicions as to Joe's purpose had been awakened; and now with the rakish little *Daybreak* alongside, and the knowledge that such craft often dash recklessly into innocent young hearts like Katie's for the purpose of securing a most precious treasure, how in the world had it happened that, Mrs. Pepper knowing all this, she has failed in communicating it to Katie? Why,

simply because Joe has given Katie no indication of the tender feeling in his heart toward her. So her mind had not been ready to yield easy access to Mrs. Pepper's surmisings. Then Katie's parents, having seen nothing in Joe that furnished the slightest ground for Mrs. Pepper's imputations, had done nothing at all to fill in the blank place existing in Katie's mind regarding the whole subject. For to tell the truth, Mr. and Mrs. Aston cared as little for what Mrs. Pepper thought and said as they did for the latest news from Iceland, but allowed her to follow the dictates of her own heart unquestioned. This served to disguise from Katie the fact so patent to Mrs. Pepper, that Joe had run into the peaceful haven of the Astons' home to make its very joy and hope his capture — his prize.

Then there was that Annapolis girl. They all, one day, were resting on the rocky incline facing Anemone Cave, when, just to worry Joe, Harry began talking about the pretty daughter of a commander in the Navy — Joe having been a frequent visitor at his house in the yard at Annapolis.

It was a simple passing remark, but it helped to keep up Katie's illusion. And what was more, Miss Maud could give her no hint as to how this matter stood with Joe. Her cousin Harry was uncommunicative in Joe's affairs, so both herself and Katie fancied it was a grave secret. And Joe

had kept his secret so close that Harry had been astonished at his apparent indifference to Katie, and at times thought that Joe after all might have lost his heart in the Aroostook or even to the Annapolis girl. So, after all, Mrs. Pepper is the only person in the world who can enlighten Katie in regard to our hero's intentions.

And this undoubtedly would have been done but for Mrs. Pepper's habit of treating nearly all the young men of Katie's acquaintance very much alike. Joe was served no worse than the rest of them. Even the few streaks of affability which he had seen fall upon Ned did not break from under her cloud till she was aware that Maud, and not Katie, was the object of Ned's devotion. Miss Maud explained Mrs. Pepper's case in a very few words. "It is Mrs. Pepper's delight," she said, "to pick up young men and put them down hard." On this account, therefore, the poverty of Mrs. Pepper's good-will toward Joe, and the rough handling she sometimes gave him, evoked scarcely a comment from Katie.

We already know of Mrs. Pepper's sense of propriety. Upon this she daily plumed herself. She never failed on any occasion, favorable or otherwise, when she thought the necessities of the case demanded it, to impart her views as to what Katie should do, and what she shouldn't do. She often said if she could have her way Katie would never

be permitted to go on a ride with any other escort than her father. As for buckboards and canoes, we already know what she thinks about them. And she was always talking about chaperons. She often proposed accompanying the young people as Katie's chaperon. So anxious was she to fulfill this office, that she would even have gone on a buckboard drive for the sake of carrying her point with Katie and Mrs. Aston. Katie had asked her to go in a canoe one day, knowing that she would not do it, and this was the only request she ever received from Katie to become her chaperon. Had the chaperoning lain between a canoe and a balloon, she would have gone on a trip to the clouds with Katie first. But she never ceased talking of chaperons, and Katie often told her mother that, as regarded the freedom of young girls, her Aunt Pepper was in warm sympathy with the customs of Brazil. So the little sour looks she gave Joe, and the little thorny remarks she made to him, preceding the young people's wanderings over Mt. Desert, were put down in Katie's books to the credit of Mrs. Pepper's sense of what was proper.

Against the individual, the intrinsic Joe Bently, the Joe Bently disconnected from his worldly outlook, Mrs. Pepper had little to say. He was too strongly intrenched in the esteem of his friends for this. She knew that his education, high sense of honor, handsome, manly countenance, magnifi-

cent physique, and other fine qualities, would in any event preserve him from prejudice and dislike. Besides, she had read the Newcomes, and was aware of the danger in case of personal attack upon Joe, of making Katie his ally. And this she would not risk; at least, she had not dared risk it yet. So while she could not let Joe altogether alone, she was very careful in what she said in Katie's presence about him. And above all, she had been watchful to give Katie no intimation of her fears touching Joe's becoming a permanent annex of the Aston household.

Her policy, therefore, with Katie was, to let Joe alone for the most part, or when she disparaged him to do so through his profession. This she thought was her best card. If the Navy could be held up to Katie in its true light, she never would throw herself away by marrying into it. No girl with Katie's prospects, in her sober senses, she thought, would go into such a life, no matter how attached she might become to a handsome young fellow like Joe. And, she reasoned, by talking down the Navy, she could at the same time talk up the law. In producing in Katie's mind a dislike of the one, she might at the same time create in her an admiration of the other. At any rate, if she could do no more than give Katie's preference a decided tip in favor of the law, who knew what might take place between Katie and that ris-

ing young lawyer of Providence. This was what Mrs. Pepper was aiming at, and she had hope of ultimate victory; though she had to confess that Joe was giving her much trouble.

She had begun to anticipate the meeting between Katie and her young friend. Katie had promised to visit her at her home. All this seemed a wonderful scheme to Mrs. Pepper, clever and far-seeing, if it does seem otherwise than clever and far-sighted to us.

And in one way and another, Mrs. Pepper managed to give Joe quite a professional whittling up without Katie's suspecting her true purpose. For, to sum up this matter, did not the shavings she thus took from Joe, fall into a general heap of her whittlings? And did not Katie, to whom we are indebted for this figure, say to Miss Maud one day, "She's always whittling away at something or somebody like a boy with a new jack-knife"? So things went on.

But now the time had come for Mrs. Pepper to do something more. She must have a talk with Katie herself. Mr. and Mrs. Aston's eyes had refused to be pried open, and now Katie's must undergo an operation. Things had gotten to such a pass that intervention was absolutely required with Katie. As her aunt, she must know how matters stood with her, and she must warn her against our cadet. Katie must not be allowed to

tread so near the edge of danger without information as to her whereabouts, and the dreadful consequences of a tumble over. "No matter what comes of it," said Mrs. Pepper to herself, "I won't stand by without raising my voice. She shall not throw herself away."

It happened that, for two or three days after the incidents connected with Nubble Hill, there was no communication between the Daybreak and the Celeste. The cadets had been on duty and the weather had been unpropitious. On one of these days, Mrs. Pepper and Katie chanced to be alone on board the yacht. Mr. and Mrs. Aston had gone to spend the day with some cottager, and Ned and Maud were off at an Indian encampment buying young gull skins. Katie had concluded to remain on board for the purpose of clearing up a batch of correspondence, so long neglected that several of her most valued friendships were thereby imperilled. She sat busily writing at a large desk in the open cabin, and Mrs. Pepper was in the favorite rocker, slowly hemming something or other.

The set, rigid look of her countenance, and the mechanical movement of her needle, indicated that some stern purpose was in her mind. Every minute or two she would look up from her sewing at Katie as if she were waiting an opportunity to open conversation. Presently that opportunity

was given. All at once, Katie experienced one of those pen-biting pauses which will come in letter-writing as well as in the writing of stories, and Mrs. Pepper began :

"Katie dear," said she, "when is that trip to Somes' Sound coming off?"

"I don't know, Auntie," Katie answered, her mind half on her letter. "I fear it's given up."

Katie, as we have seen, usually called Mrs. Pepper, Auntie. She was of a very loving, forgiving disposition. Mrs. Pepper sometimes drew an angry retort from her, but she cherished no grudges. Her father was rather amused, on such occasions, at the sharpness of the words that fell from the tip of her little tongue; but when they were gone her anger was expended, and she was generally sorry for what she had said.

"Oh! is it?" said Mrs. Pepper. "How did that happen?"

"I believe the Daybreak's going out for target practice, or something of that kind."

"How much longer is the Daybreak going to be here, Katie?"

"I'm sure I don't know. I hope, though, for some time."

"Why do you wish that?"

"So our party won't be broken up."

"Well, I think the sooner that party is broken up the better it will be all round."



"Why, what do you mean, Auntie?"

"Doesn't it keep the cadets from their duties?"

"If you knew how strict they are on board a man-of-war, you'd never say that." And Katie started for her room after a package of old letters, wondering why Mrs. Pepper, with her extreme dislike for the Navy, should take so great an interest in the disciplinary well-being of its young hopefuls. But as she began to rummage her bureau after the letters, she said to herself, "Aunt Pepper's just like the top drawer of this bureau. I never can straighten her out, no matter how much I try." In a moment or two she was back at the desk overhauling the letters which she had been successful in finding.

Clearing her throat, Mrs. Pepper proceeded the second time. "Katie dear, I've seen it all along."

"Seen what, Auntie?" said Katie, looking up in surprise.

"The danger of having the Daybreak here."

"I don't understand you, Auntie."

"Well, to be honest with you, you may get to liking Joe Bently."

From the glimmer in Katie's eyes, to revert to what had come into Joe's head, she had gotten a fire-fly flash of light. But she asked, "Why do you think that?"

"Oh! there are things about him that are rather pleasing."

Katie looked as if she wouldn't object to hearing what they were.

"It can't be denied," continued Mrs. Pepper, "that he has a fine physique and remarkably handsome eyes."

"He has fine eyes," said Katie, with a twinkle in her own, "but Jim Pendleton and Tom Sanford have got just as fine."

"Handsome eyes are the most dangerous things about a man's looks," added Mrs. Pepper.

"I never set much by eyes, Auntie."

"Oh! well, a young girl like you, dear, can't be so much with a young fellow like Bently, without getting to like him."

"I do like him already; we all like him very much. If we didn't we shouldn't ask him here."

"Katie, this is too serious a matter for such nonsense. Think of how dreadful it would be for a girl in your position to fall in love with a young man your papa has helped on in the world."

Katie gave Mrs. Pepper a look which plainly said, "If I want to fall in love with Joe Bently, or anybody else, it's nobody's affair but papa's, mamma's and my own."

"Think of the life you'd lead if you should marry into the Navy," Mrs. Pepper went on. "I'd rather see you marry a farmer."

"I've always aspired to be mistress of a dairy," said the perverse little Katie.

"Katie Aston, you astonish me by your levity. I don't wonder Joe Bently got notions in his head."

"What notions, Auntie?"

"Oh! that he sort of belongs here; that all he has to do is to say the word and he can step right into the family any time."

Katie gave Mrs. Pepper a wicked little look, and said something to the effect that those were very queer notions for a modest young fellow like Joe to have.

"It's no wonder he thinks so," said Mrs. Pepper, an angry flush coming into her face; "you take him everywhere with you, and he almost lives on this yacht."

"He has never come here without being urged to come," said Katie, growing serious in Joe's defense. "You heard papa say what work he had to get him here the first time. He had to drag him over."

"He doesn't have to drag him over now, I notice. Give a naval cadet an inch and he'll take an ell."

"Auntie, to be plain with you, you are very unkind to Joe. Papa and mamma think they never can do too much for him."

"Why should they feel so?"

"Didn't he save my life? And I've heard papa say a dozen times, that he should always be welcome to come to see us."

"But anybody would have saved your life, dear. It was an act of common humanity."

"Anybody didn't save it but Joe; and people always feel differently toward such ones."

"That's where people are wrong. They let their hearts get the better of their judgments."

"You talk very unfeelingly."

"So it would seem. But this is a world of hard facts, dear, and we should never be carried away by sentiment."

"I don't see any sentiment in our treatment of Joe, but that of ordinary gratitude."

"Well, do you think it's proper for him to come here so much?" said Mrs. Pepper, putting the question flatly.

"Yes; if he wants to," tartly returned Katie.

"I should think your father and mother would see that it's very improper, if you don't," Mrs. Pepper went on.

"Do you mean to say papa and mamma don't know what's proper?" said Katie, an angry little light leaping into her eyes.

"Yes, dear; they know what's proper in an abstract sort of way. But parents are proverbially blind, you know."

"I don't think we shall slam the door in Joe's face, Auntie, just to gratify your sense of what is proper," shot from Katie like an arrow.

"He was very proper till you began to make so

much of him," said Mrs. Pepper in a biting tone, working nearer her point.

"Who do you mean by you?"

"Oh! all of you."

"Auntie, what's the cause of this arraignment? Papa and mamma never would have talked in this way to me." And Katie's little foot beat the carpet, and her eyes flashed indignation and defiance at Mrs. Pepper.

Mrs. Pepper had gone too far, and she saw it; but she was angry now. She did not, as she ought to have done, stop right where she was and not exasperate the unoffending girl any farther. So she asked, in a tone which plainly spoke her opinion as to the accessibility of the Aston mind to the subject of Joe Bently, or that particular phase of it so greedy of her own attention, "Do you wish me to explain?"

"I don't care."

"To be perfectly frank with you," she began, controlling her voice quite well — "and I know you will pardon me, for I have only your good at heart, and I wouldn't say a word about it if I didn't feel it was proper and my duty" —

"Please go on; you mix me all up."

"Well, then," cruelly fell from Mrs. Pepper, "you are setting your cap for Joe Bently; you are throwing yourself at him, and everybody sees it."

Mrs. Pepper had not intended saying just this.

But the conversation had taken a turn which rather confirmed her fears of Katie and Joe. She thought she discovered signs in Katie of something more than a liking for our hero. She must say something that would make her less cordial to him, thus forcing upon him the conviction that he was not so welcome on board the *Celeste* as he had been. After such a thrust as this, Katie would be driven by pride, she thought, if nothing else, to be less friendly toward the cadet. And the different atmosphere that would surround her then might produce a chill in him. He might thus be led to keep himself somewhat aloof from Katie; and if, meanwhile, good fortune and the Navy Department should send the *Daybreak* on a foreign cruise, the danger which now seemed to threaten the young girl might be wholly averted.

It was a very bold step for Mrs. Pepper to take, but she could not relinquish what she had set her heart upon for Katie. Katie must be her contribution to Providence society. Her father was able to provide her an elegant home in that beloved city, and Mrs. Pepper could then point to it all with supreme pride, and say to her friends, "See what a queen I have brought you!" And she cherished the hope that in the court of that same queen she herself might be chief lady. Was not this incentive enough to her to break by any means the spell which Katie might be under to brass

buttons? So she went at poor Katie, utterly destitute of the prudence and diplomacy of that great profession in whose interest she was so ardently at work.

But Mrs. Pepper was not clever. If she had been she certainly never would have had a scheme at all.

But Katie — poor little Katie! No, she would not thank us for saying this. For she was capable of taking care of herself. It was all a new experience to her, but she rose to the occasion. She gave Mrs. Pepper a piece of her mind, and not a small piece, either. A novelist would work up what she said into a highly intense dramatic form, but Katie would not suffer it to be done, even if the writer were capable of it.

However, it may be said, that while she explicitly informed Mrs. Pepper that she did not love Joe Bently, and had never thought of doing so, Joe Bently did not come down a peg in her esteem; and Mrs. Pepper's treatment of him, the meaning of which was now as vivid to her imagination as the flood of sunlight which had just broken through the cabin skylight, was to her eyes, was set forth with a comprehensiveness of grasp, and a pointedness of statement, that frightened that perverse lady. Mrs. Pepper got scratched by that cat in the bag, out at liberty the second time in the Aston family through her foolish fumbling

with the strings, a good deal worse than she did the first time.

What did Katie do when she had finished with Mrs. Pepper? Why, the natural thing. She went to her state-room, threw herself down on her little bed, and cried as if her heart would break.



## CHAPTER XXI.

MR. LONG.

A FEW minutes only did Katie's passion of tears last. Then she bethought herself of the red and swollen eyes that would be sure to follow continued weeping. And would not this betray the fact to the rest of the yacht's company, when they should return, that something had gone wrong during their absence? Before she entered the state-room she had resolved that her parents should know nothing of her trouble with Mrs. Pepper. She knew if her father should discover that she had been crying, in his sympathy for her, he would not rest until he knew the whole story. This, she said to herself, would not do. She was aware that ordinarily, her father was the mildest and least excitable of men, but if he knew of this affair, there would be trouble in the camp. In other words, a tempest would in reality shake the Celeste's cabin.

This Katie knew very well. And on no account would she arouse her father against Mrs. Pepper. Had she been of a resentful disposition

she might have done so. She therefore prudently decided to let the comparative harmony hitherto existing between her parents and Mrs. Pepper remain undisturbed. Of course she had other reasons for doing so, not the least of which was the embarrassing position in which it would place Joe. Of Mrs. Pepper's interview with her father and mother on the identical subject that had wrought such havoc with her feelings, she had received no word of warning. So, having taken a look at her red face and wet eyes in the truthful mirror, she saw the necessity for prompt action.

Katie was materially aided in this. No sooner had she resorted to the little feminine devices well known for their speedy effect in restoring the countenance to its habitual repose, than a knock at her state-room door apprised her that she was wanted. It might be Mrs. Pepper's knock. It had a half-penitent sound, and perhaps she was in a mood for making up. But Katie was not ready for that just yet; so she did not answer. The knock was repeated, this time accompanied by the voice of the servant girl, Mary, soliciting Katie's presence on deck, where she said there was a "quare bye" who desired to see her.

Assured that it was not Mrs. Pepper, she directed Mary to inform the boy that she would be up presently. She walked past her aunt with some show of dignity, wondering who the "quare bye"

could be. Instantly she appeared on deck, she recognized him. From Joe's descriptions, he was unmistakable. It was none other than Enoch Long who had demanded to see her. Long stood looking around him with the air of one who is perfectly at home anywhere on this planet. His cap was canted on one side of his head at a very rakish angle, and he carried a lump on one side of his face, which appeared and disappeared with as marvelous dexterity as though his cheeks were a pair of juggler's cups and his tongue was skilled in sleight of hand. His body was as stationary as a fence post, while his head was turning in every direction, in devoted service to his eyes, which ran about the deck as though commissioned to carry every thing away with them. Wonder was in Long's face, but composure and self-complacency were in his manner.

The instant he heard Katie's light step on the deck he turned and advanced toward her with an awkward attempt at a military bearing. Planting himself at a distance of several yards from where she stood, he gave her a military salute. This was as far as he would permit himself to go. He would not defer to the — to him — absurd custom of removing his cap in the presence of ladies. In fact, he at one time told Joe that he didn't mind "salutin' a woman no more'n he did an officer; but he wouldn't take his cap off to no live woman —

he'd be hanged if he would. They didn't do it where he lived, and he guessed they knowed what people oughter do."

After his salute, he stood eying Katie with a good deal of curiosity. In this he gave no impression of rudeness. It was simple, untutored curiosity in Enoch—unmitigated by the slightest fear. He surveyed Katie so coolly and comically, that it served as a counter-irritant, and before she knew it she was laughing as uncontrollably as a short time before she had been weeping.

In a moment, however, Long's inspection of Katie was over with, and, giving her an indulgent look, as much as to say, "you'll do," he introduced himself as "Mr. Long, coxswain o' the Daybreak's dinghy." By one month's exclusive devotion to duty, and Joe's aid, Long had mounted to this lofty eminence, and he was so proud of his promotion that to the uninitiated, among whom he supposed Katie to be, he always introduced himself as "Mr. Long, coxswain o' the Daybreak's dinghy." After this introduction, readjusting the lump in his cheek, Long began a conversation by asking, "Be I a-talkin' to Miss Astin?"

Katie promptly told him that he was.

"Why, waal, I'll be blowed, ef this 'ere hain't a mighty pooty yort. Ben here long?"

"Not a great while," replied Katie, her amusement in no degree abating.

"Hired for the season?" asked Long.

"I suppose she belongs to my father," said Katie, half convulsed.

"By gracious! Does she, though? It must take a heap o' money to run this 'ere yort. Don't it, now?"

"Quite a little sum, I've no doubt," Katie managed to articulate.

"Orful rich man, your father is. Now hain't he?"

Never having felt the extremes of poverty, Katie gave Long a look which implied that he might be correct.

"That takes elbow grease, I can tell yer," said Long, casting an admiring eye upon the bright work ornamenting the Celeste's deck. "I'd rather clean down two hosses an' sweep out the stable to boot, than do up that pin-rail, there," he added, pointing to the object in question.

"It does require a good deal of work," answered Katie.

"By gracious! but a yort lays over a man-o'-war, though! Don't it, now?" And without waiting for Katie's answer, he went on. "Ef it warn't that I'm bound to the Government till I'm twenty-one, I'd ship aboard this beauty, wouldn't I, now? I jest would, you bet. I like her."

Katie looked her regrets touching the unfortunate deprivation the yacht was experiencing.

"By gracious!" cried Long, his demeanor suddenly changing; "I was nigh forgittin' what I came fur." And here he dove his hand into his trousers pocket and pulled out a small package of much crumpled envelopes. "We're goin' to have a big time aboard the Daybreak, an' Mr. Bently sent me over with these ere invitations," and he handed Katie the package.

Katie at once proceeded to open the missive. It was an invitation to be present at a reception to be given on board ship on such and such a date.

"Ever ben to one o' them parties aboard a man-o'-war?" continued Long, when Katie had finished the reading.

"I've never had the honor," Katie replied.

"Comin', hain't yer?"

"Perhaps so," said Katie, smiling.

Satisfied that she comprehended the full import of his errand, he asked, "You wouldn't mind my takin' a look round this ere yort, would yer?"

"Certainly not," said Katie; "go about as much as you please."

"Would it be askin' too much to let me look inter the cabin first?"

"O, no! come right down," said Katie, with a beaming face, leading the way.

"By gracious!" said Long, overcome by the splendor of the cabin, "this is pooty!"

Mrs. Pepper sat in her old place hemming away

with a much greater show of industry than at first. When she saw that it was a common sailor-boy who had followed Katie into the cabin, the usual cloud gathered upon her features. This black look Katie did not see. Her eyes would not yet look upon Mrs. Pepper. But the look was not lost upon Long, and coming nearer to Katie, he said in a substantial Vermont country whisper, his eyes fixed on Mrs. Pepper, "That's a queer piece." But further comment was lost in more interesting phenomena about the cabin.

Long examined everything about the cabin, his satisfaction every now and then expressed by his favorite ejaculation. At first Mrs. Pepper indulged in frowns. But finally she was forced to laughter, for the young coxswain's loquacity was capable of overcoming a more frigid countenance than was hers. By and by, however, as he continued his investigations, the cloud returned.

Of all objects in the cabin, however, that which pleased Long most was the well-filled cake basket standing out in full relief upon the sideboard. Katie discovered the trick which his eyes were trying to play for his tongue, and she directed Mary to bring a plate and make a glass of lemonade. During the refreshment his flow of tongue was quite incredible. He asked Katie's opinion as to the best kind of brake to be used on the Vermont hills, and the handsomest model for a dinghy. At

last he intimated that he would be obliged to cut his stay short, as "his boat" was waiting for him alongside. As he rose to take his leave he said, "Yer hain't no answer fur Mr. Bently?"

Mrs. Pepper looked daggers at him.

"No; I believe not," said Katie.

"But yer comin', hain't yer?"

"I think it's not improbable," said Katie in a tone calculated to freeze out the subject.

"You don't know what you'll miss, ef yer don't come. We've ben a sendin' invitations round to the hotels, an' all the tony people'll be there."

Mrs. Pepper gave Long another vicious look, and thought of the Modiste and the Silk and Ribbon.

"They don't have no sich times in Bar Harbor every day. Ef yer wants to meet nice people, you'd better come."

"Yes, I will," Katie finally said in a low voice, trying, if possible, to check Long's steady flow of talk.

But nobody ever did that. "Glad to hear it," he went on. "I'll tell Mr. Bently. He don't take no stock in girls ginerally, but he'll be glad to see you; he likes you. I hope that time'll cheer 'im up, too. He's ben mad as thunder fur three days now," and Long looked at Katie as if he wanted her to ask what he had been mad about.



But Katie's interrogatives, both of eyes and tongue, failed to give any signal. "Won't he ever stop?" she said to herself, glancing out of the corner of her eye at her aunt, and moving nervously toward the door. She saw that Mrs. Pepper's ears were on the alert, and that she was again very angry.

"You see," persisted Long, "I b'long to Mr. Bently's gun's crew, an' only yesterday he laid me out. By gracious! didn't he do it slick!"

Katie tried to hurry Long out of the cabin. She feared that some terrible blast was coming, and she fairly trembled; but Long's conclusion amounted to nothing when it came. He said something to the effect that Joe had reflected both humorously and angrily upon his abilities in ordnance. And he wound up by telling Katie in substance, that Joe had insisted that his (Long's) place in life was abaft a pair of blow-handles or abreast an ox team, but that he and Mr. Bently didn't agree in everything.

Enoch insisted on shaking hands with Katie before leaving the cabin, but he only scowled at Mrs. Pepper. Katie hardly dared to trust her little hand where the two seas of Enoch's squeeze met, but she bravely launched it into the hollow of his palm, and as good luck would have it, recovered it without disaster. After telling Katie, just outside the cabin door, that he liked her and liked the

yacht, but didn't like "that woman," he bit off a huge piece of tobacco from a Navy plug he carried in his pocket, and took his departure.

Delivered from this strange visitor, Katie made her way to her state-room, first gathering up her writing materials from the cabin desk to carry with her. But one or two attempts to finish the letter she had been at work upon convinced her that she was in no mood for writing. So she drew away her chair to a place where she could sit and gaze out upon the harbor through the open port. And there she sat, going over the whole ground in her thoughts, of what she had passed through that morning.

Meanwhile the *Celeste* swung to her anchor, bringing the *Daybreak* into full view. Up to this time the *Daybreak* had been completely hidden. It happened by the swinging of the yacht that Katie's thoughts were rendered the more vivid; for right before her eyes, slowly passing back and forth on the *Daybreak's* topgallant forecastle, was the principal subject of them. It was Joe's forenoon watch, and he was in his old and favorite place. Every now and then he turned his eyes toward the *Celeste*, bestowing upon her, Katie thought, a not unwistful look.

Katie's mind had by no means recovered from the hurt it had received. And with Joe plainly visible a few cable-lengths away, she found herself

wondering if he could ever have gotten any such idea into his head about her, as had found lodgment in Mrs. Pepper's brain. "No," she said to herself, "he's too noble and high-minded to put any such interpretation upon my conduct toward him. He would resent this accusation, if he knew it, as strongly as I do." She soon settled with herself that it would be simply impossible for Joe to regard her as Mrs. Pepper did. He knew the intimate terms they had been on meant nothing more on her part than a sincere and trustful friendship. And she knew that in his kindly bearing toward her he was only modestly striving to reciprocate her cordiality and good-will in terms of equal friendship.

So as she thought it all over, she saw that there had been nothing whatever in her relations with Joe which could furnish any but a mischievous mind with such a charge as had been made. And the more she thought it over the more indignant she became. The idea that she, Katie Aston, should ever set her cap for anybody! This was what rankled in her breast! And as Mrs. Pepper's ugly remark kept pushing itself into the forefront of her thoughts, how red her face became, and how her little foot, as it had done before, beat the deck in her indignation! How humiliated she felt that anybody, even Mrs. Pepper, could indulge such a thought of her! Katie knew her father's wealth,

knew her own prospects in life, had had many evidences of her importance as things go in this world, and now to have this thing flung at her, it sorely wounded her pride; it raised her anger to a stormy pitch! For an instant she even felt a little rising of ill-humor against Joe, whose coming had been the occasion of her aunt's malicious comment upon her.

But she felt that this was most ungenerous. What had Joe done that she should ever have an unkind feeling toward him? He was still in plain view, walking slowly up and down, declaring even in his unconscious bearing the honesty and manliness of his nature. As Katie looked upon him she was conscious of a feeling of pride in him as a young man in whose material welfare her father had so much interested himself; and she felt glad of his friendship. How sorry she was for what had happened to disturb their kindly relations.

The new set of emotions which the sight of Joe had awakened completely subdued her anger. She was now pitying both herself and him. They had been badly treated, and they had cause for common sympathy. "Of course," she thought, "he can't sympathize with me, for he won't ever know anything about it; but I can sympathize with him all the same."

She found herself heartily espousing Joe's cause; she felt that he had been really abused.

As her eye followed him, she noted that he seemed to be thinking upon something or other as intently as she was doing upon what lay before her mind. Something in his appearance went straight home to her sympathy. Indeed, and she couldn't tell why it was, her sympathy had been recently drawn out toward Joe on more than one occasion. There had been something about him that appealed to the deeper, perhaps tenderer side of her nature. She had not pretended to account for it; she had not tried to account for it. It was not his terrible experience with that Annapolis girl that so touched her with a feeling for the soreness of heart which, from the nature of the case, must have been left in him. No, that wasn't it. For ever since that conversation up the Nubble that Annapolis girl had been less of a reality to Katie. She had seemed more like a touching little story from the Mythology she had been reading; painful, but unreal. At any rate, as she now gazed upon him, she thought it altogether too bad that a restraint would have to be put upon their warm, simple friendship.

For would not this have to be done? she asked herself over and over again. If people had got to thinking about her as Mrs. Pepper did, how could she be just the same to him as she had been? She must protect herself against unjust criticism.

She would have to be more reserved in his

presence ; keep him off a little. But if she had been giving a false impression of her state of mind toward him, why had not her parents been as quick to see it as anybody else ? Then she remembered Mrs. Pepper's remark that parents are proverbially blind. She wondered if her father and mother did not really understand this affair, and her answer was, " Of course papa and mamma know all about it. They know that Joe and I never dreamed of being anything to each other but friends."

But how should she treat Joe in the future ? This was the question now pressing for an answer. Ought she to see him less often ? And when they happened to be thrown together, must she show him that their friendship had been running too much according to its own sweet will, and needed a little pruning ? Would this be fair to Joe ? Would it not convey to him the idea that he had in some way been presuming upon her graciousness, and she found it necessary to teach him a lesson ? This would amount to an unkindness. Poor Joe ! she couldn't turn on him in that way. He had been so unassuming, so genuinely modest, had had such a high ideal of what he owed to her as a friend, that she could not now find it in her heart to do anything that would give him pain.

And Katie thought to herself, like the sensible,

tender-hearted girl that she was, that she would not be any different to Joe from what she had been. What if people should say that she was setting her cap for him ; that wouldn't make it so. People said anything that came into their heads. So long as her papa and mamma, and Ned and Maud, and Joe and herself knew that it was only friendship between them, why should she care what others thought? "No," she said almost audibly, taking another kindly look at Joe through her state-room port, "I won't make him unhappy the little time he has left in Bar Harbor. At best, his life will be hard enough when he gets away. I won't send along a batch of unpleasant memories to make it any harder."

And thus Katie, for the moment, decided that she would be Joe's friend just the same as ever.

But this decision did not close the chapter of her thoughts about Joe, by any means. Her mind had been stirred up to go over the whole subject of Joe Bently. Presently a suggestion came which made her decision for the time being seem a little premature. It clothed the affair in quite a different hue, and gave her some little concern.

If she should be just the same to Joe, might it not be putting him at some little risk? Katie did not have a superfluous amount of egotism, but she was aware that peculiarly susceptible natures in the opposite sex might be smitten even by her

charms. And she now asked whether Joe himself could be in any such danger from her. Since her adoption of the mythical theory in regard to the Annapolis girl, she had thought several times whether it could be possible that Joe's friendship for her was deeper than it seemed. It was a true, and she felt from Joe's high character, even a beautiful friendship, transparent as clearest water. But clear water deceives. She remembered that she had looked into many a spring, the translucency of whose water had seemed to bring the far-away bottom so near that she could almost touch it with her hand. Was Joe's friendship for her like this?

Then she thought of it in another way. From all she had ever learned of the natural history of such cases, when a tender feeling for some maiden possesses a young man's heart, it always gives some little sign of its existence. It might be timid as a bird, but once in a while it would be sure to hop out on some little twig of a word where it could be seen. Or some glance might part the leaves of the mystery and show it hiding in its little nest. Katie had to smile at this conceit, though in all seriousness it had entered her mind. And this time also, all things considered, she concluded it would be no risk to Joe if she permitted herself to keep right on with him as she had been doing.



But another phase of the question presented itself. How about herself? Was there any danger in her case? Was every approach to her heart closed to the young cadet?

She liked him—admired him, and was even fond of him, but did she really love him? No, she did not! She laid this down with emphasis. She was too busy with her papa and mamma, her friend Maud, her pets—among which was the yacht itself—her plans and her many occupations, to give scarcely any attention to the subject upon which the whole world runs mad. We must remember that Katie is hardly out of her girlhood yet. But she really felt, though she had such an interest in Joe, that she did not have affection for him; the kind, at least, that spells itself with four letters. And Katie did not feel that she was in any danger of losing her heart to Joe. She cherished a greater liking for him than she had ever known for any other young man. Those fine eyes and that magnificent physique had appealed wondrously to her in an artistic sense; the power Joe had of touching the higher, better side of human nature she had felt the force of; but she could not say she loved him. And she did not feel she could love him in the sense in which she well knew he deserved to be loved.

For, to tell the truth, Katie felt that Joe was on too high a pinnacle for her to reach. He

met her ideals, but did not exactly suit her temperament. This was why she now felt, though she did not attempt to explain it to herself, that she could maintain the invulnerability of her heart against him. Had Joe possessed a little more of the every-day sort of human nature, Katie's heart then could have no more stood against him than a blossom can stand against a strong wind. But Joe did not have this every-day sort of human nature. As Katie finished this colloquy with herself she was in quite a cheery mood.

And she summed it all up with the declaration, "Joe and I can be the best of friends, with not the least danger of becoming lovers."

Thinking upon the absurd ideas people have about the perils of such a friendship as existed between her and the young cadet, she was now ready to sit down to the solitary lunch which she had ordered in her room. Her aunt, meanwhile, took hers in equal, but less happy solitude, from the table out in the cabin.

When, toward evening, the absentees had all returned, Mr. Aston and Ned had a great scheme to propose; which, when proposed, caused Mrs. Pepper to exclaim, "Oh! mercy on us," but brought a look of pleasure into every other face. The scheme was simply this: Some time the coming week the yacht was to go out for a few days'

trip at sea. Mr. Aston had met Captain Farradale ashore, and had received the promise from him that the two cadets should have a leave of several days, and invitations were to be sent them next morning to join the jubilant company for a sniff of real salt air in Katie's "golden lily" of a yacht.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### THE DAYBREAK'S RECEPTION.

THE course of true friendship, like that of true love, does not always run smoothly. This, at least, Katie came to know. For an entire week no opportunity offered to prove to our hero the wonderful things her new, reawakened friendship designed doing for him.

She had defended him in a most friendly manner during the interview with Mrs. Pepper. And she had likewise resolved that as soon as possible she would renew her friendship with Joe, and right before her aunt's eyes, too. She would let her see that that friendship had survived the storm through which it had passed. The beautiful flower still lived. Not a stem had been broken, not a leaf torn away. And Joe should be acquainted with the fact, too, even though he was to know nothing of all that had happened to give it its renewed freshness. O, yes! In the kindness of her heart Katie purposed doing wonderful things for our cadet.

It must also be confessed that aside from this

warmer, tenderer feeling she treasured for Joe, there was likewise a somewhat reverse spirit felt toward Mrs. Pepper. Katie meant to let her know that she would do as she pleased about Joe Bently. Mrs. Pepper wasn't her guardian, and this affair was no concern of hers, either. In her more vindictive moods she felt as if she would like to engage in a desperate flirtation. But she was too warm a friend to Joe. So she simply resolved that her auntie should see that all her talk had made no difference whatever in her treatment of him.

The great obstacle, however, in carrying out this plan was Joe himself. For one whole week he did not show himself on board the yacht. How to account for his absence was a sore puzzle. And more perplexing yet, he had declined Mr. Aston's invitation to become a member of the yachting party. He simply stated by note that he should be obliged to forego the pleasure, as he had made arrangements to spend the time appointed for the Celeste's trip on a visit to his own home. Joe's conduct was as disappointing as it was mysterious to the young people. All this had the effect, however, of somewhat cooling Katie's ardor, as well as frustrating her plans. Harry tried to make things appear as well as possible. During the week of Joe's seclusion from the social world, he made several calls upon his cousin. He told Katie that Joe was completely

absorbed in his studies, getting ready for his examination, two years ahead. He said he sat up late every night boning away on Electric Potential. Electric Potential meant very little to Katie, save as excuse for Joe's singularities. But it served as well as another to relieve her own mind. Mathematics, she had been told, is at the bottom of all naval eccentricities.

Harry also undertook to clear up Joe's sudden resolve to visit the Aroostook. He suggested to Katie that Joe's mother might be quite ill. She had been ill, he said, for Joe had told him so. It must be something of that kind, he insisted, or Bently would never have given up the yachting trip, the crowning event of their season at Bar Harbor. This seemed quite plausible to Katie, but it did not altogether satisfy her.

Had Katie known what passed between the cadets just after Joe sent his note declining her papa's invitation, what would she have thought of Edgerton's apologies for his friend? There had been a scene in the Daybreak's steerage. Joe's withdrawal from the party had been a bitter disappointment to Harry. He didn't care a fig to go without Joe; indeed, he did not want to go without him, he said. And when he found what Joe had done, he went at him in his peculiar manner. They were alone in the steerage.

"Joey B.," said he, as usual asserting his fond-

ness for striking epithets, "you're an ass!" And when Joe, in concern for his self-respect, hinted that an explanation was in order, Harry continued: "You're the worst kind of an ass. I didn't believe it possible that you could develop such long ears."

Joe flushed, but made no reply.

"It was all done on your account, anyway," Harry went on, perceiving the painful laboring of Joe's emotions. "Mr. Aston didn't care a picayune for Brentford and me. He wanted to show you his yacht at sea, and you've made a nice mess of it."

"I didn't look at it in that way," said Joe, wincing.

"You're way of looking at things, lately, has been mighty mysterious, Joey."

Joe began to question if his angle of vision had not been somewhat distorted.

"The first thing you know, the Astons will throw you overboard, neck and heels. They won't stand any nonsense, I can tell you. They're not the people to do it. You've treated them outrageously. The only one you've been decent to is Mrs. Pepper, and she wouldn't lift a finger to get you out of Purgatory."

"No," Joe thought, "but she'd use both hands to get me in."

"You were positively rude to Katie Aston that

night we came back from the Nubble," added Harry, waxing warmer. "If she's the girl I think she is, she'll get even with you." And with another attempt to establish identity between our hero and the little animal whose contrariness and secretiveness he now represented, to Harry's mind, if nothing more, that young gentleman left the steerage in disgust.

Harry's talk was not altogether new to Joe; nevertheless, it cast him into deep trouble. He looked somewhat as Schopy had often done when Coverly took occasion to compare the vital statistics of Bar Harbor with those of Rio Janeiro, to which latter place, he always insisted, the Daybreak would be ordered in time to assist at the inauguration of the next yellow fever season. Joe was really in a dreadful state of mind. He had never been quite so wrought up before. What would he not now have given, could he have recalled that note? Had it been really a disappointment to Mr. Aston? Would he think he had been ungrateful toward him? He almost wished the Daybreak had been sunk by an iceberg before ever she saw Bar Harbor.

Joe was getting so excited over the matter that he was obliged to resort to something or other to restore his mental equilibrium; so he took down his Integral Calculus and went to work upon Gamma Functions. But his mind could get no hold



here. He turned for relief to a work on Physics, and attacked that inscrutable Second Law of Thermodynamics. The wonder was that he stopped short of Electric Potential, but he did. He saw it was no use; his intellect had lost its power.

In his despair, he threw himself down on the transom. Perhaps he could drown his trouble in a nap. He had had the midwatch the night before, but he finally succeeded in falling asleep; yet, to carry out the figure, he found that his trouble could live under water as well as above it. It certainly did live in a short dream he had, from which he presently awoke as from a nightmare. His troubles seemed to have become a solid weight holding him down. Coverly, however, may have had a hand in creating in him a sense of their ponderable nature. Upon entering the steerage, that young officer found Bently lying on his back fast asleep, and it seemed a good chance to test the strength of his costal cartilages. He therefore took down a large tin box, containing the metallic ornaments of his full-dress uniform, and other heavy articles, and set it upon Joe's breast. It was only one more illustration of what had occurred to Joe several times: that when a cadet is in trouble, everything and everybody seem in conspiracy against him.

But to those who have followed him closely, Joe's conduct does not seem so strange. He came

back from that last excursion with the young people under a positive conviction that the time had come for the breaking off of his intimate relations with the Astons. He had already gone too far. He had permitted himself to see too much of Katie. It was placing her in a false position. People would soon be talking about them as lovers, if they were not already doing so. And this would be simply terrible. He must, during the rest of his stay at Bar Harbor, absolutely hold himself aloof from Katie. If he did not himself take the initiative in this matter, Mr. Aston doubtless soon would. In that case, how could he ever hold up his head again?

"I might just as well give up all hope of Katie, first as last," he said to himself. "Even if everything were all right with her, my hands are so tied it would do me no good. Before making a single move toward winning her, I would have to ask her father's permission, and that would settle the matter for me beyond all peradventure."

Joe thought there was about as much chance of obtaining Mr. Aston's permission to win his pretty daughter, if he could, as there would be of getting into the President's cabinet upon his personal application. And Joe was sure he would suffer martyrdom before he would tell Katie a word of the secret in his heart without her father's full consent to do so.

Filled with such convictions, he had come back from the hill with two thoughts sunk deep in his consciousness. The first was, that if the Navy had ever glittered in Katie's eyes, it had been like objects which often sparkle in the distance, but at a nearer approach utterly fail in their power of reflection. What had been quite bright to Katie, must now from a nearer view seem rather dull and opaque. And the second was what we already know—that the three members of the Aston family regarded him as the poor, but worthy young man—a very interesting object of their charity. Therefore, why should he keep on doing as he had done since coming to Bar Harbor? Why make it harder to give Katie up? Why wait for Katie's parents to, in a sense, cast him off? This was why Joe turned over that new leaf with himself, putting upon it the weight of a firm resolution, so that no little breeze of an impulse could cause it to flutter back again. And this was also why he declined Mr. Aston's invitation, and brought his calls upon his friends to such an untimely end—untimely, at least, from their point of view. Poor Joe!

Katie did not see Joe again until she met him at Enoch Long's "big time," or, at the reception on board the Daybreak. This reception was worthy of the officers and the ship. Lieutenant Bloomsbury, Harry and Joe had charge of the

decorations ; consequently the Daybreak was put in her best attire. Every number, pennant, ensign and flag, was broken out to do duty in this work. It was quite surprising how, from this great mass of bunting, littering the deck like so many tangled rainbows, a brilliant reception room or hall was improvised ; more striking in its appearance than if it had been enclosed by walls instead of by bulwarks.

Everybody from the yacht was there. Mrs. Pepper did not cease to declare that she would not go to a reception given to hotel people, but at the last minute she changed her mind.

She was much pleased, however, to note that there was not, as she put it, such an enormous catch from the hotels, after all. Boy Long's allusion to the " tony people " misled Mrs. Pepper. And to press the figure a little which had entered her mind, the line had been used as well as the seine, as the presence of some pretty big fish before her attested.

Establishing, or rather planting, herself in what might be termed a trysting place, built in alongside a heavy gun, somewhat hidden from the guests, with great delight she proceeded to make out, as far as she was able, who the big fish were. Only two or three of them were known to her personally ; but she was enabled, as she afterwards told Mrs. Aston, to identify the Cleftstones, the

Thirlstones and the Devilstones, the Witchclyffs, the Wyandottes and the Birchpoints. But the little fish, though they might have been interesting from very prodigality of numbers, like small fry generally, she wouldn't look at. Thus she continued to amuse herself till Joe found her out.

Joe had made up his mind that he would devote himself to the elderly ladies at this reception, and that he would begin with Mrs. Pepper. He thought that Mrs. Pepper, as his guest, had the first claim upon him. On such an occasion as this, at least, it was his duty to love his enemies, so he started in search of her. He hunted almost everywhere before he found her in the aforesaid trysting place, apparently bent on diverting it from its original intention. Before he had become aware that she was making a recluse of herself, he feared she had not come. His anxiety on this behalf afforded him some surprise and a very little amusement. By no means did Joe want Mrs. Pepper to stay away. He had lumped her in, so to speak, with his friends, and would have been disappointed had she not been present.

He greeted her with unusual cordiality, and expressed the hope that she was having a good time. When she imparted to him the information that she was having a better time than she expected, he proceeded to place himself at her disposal. He asked if he might not have the pleasure of a

dance with her first of all. This seemed to please her, but she hinted that at her time of life it would hardly be proper. She compromised the matter, however, by immediately seizing his arm for a promenade about the deck. As luck would have it, the first ones they met were Katie and Harry. Joe's face was crimsoned by a vicious little grin Harry gave him, and a wicked little look that slipped out of the corner of Katie's eye. Joe had previously told Harry that he wanted him to show Mrs. Pepper some attention, as in the crush she might easily be overlooked. Harry repelled him by the rude remark, "O, no, Joey! not while the girls hold out."

Joe burned with indignation, too, against Enoch Long. That young prodigy had taken his point of observation just aft of the smoke-stack, whence he was looking on with mouth wide open and eyes a-stare. When he caught sight of Mrs. Pepper hanging on Joe's arm, he astounded Joe by shaking his fist at her. Promising in his wrath nothing short of a court-martial to Long for such disrespectful behavior, he passed as quickly as possible out of his vision. But Joe got on very well with Mrs. Pepper, and when he was obliged to give her up for others who had equal claims upon him, he remarked to himself, "Something has surely happened. We never jibed like this before." How deceitful are appearances!

Joe had done gallantly by Mrs. Pepper, and Mr. Bloomsbury, into whose hands he now delivered her, did equally well. He escorted her to the wardroom, and lent his powers in persuading her to partake of the collation far beyond the bounds of prudence. Knowing Joe to be so friendly with the Astons, he said some pleasant little things about him. He was rather surprised to hear Mrs. Pepper say that she supposed he was a good enough young man, but that it was unnecessary for others to acquaint him of that fact, as he already suggested it to himself at all proper intervals.

But Mr. Bloomsbury very soon forgot all about this ill-natured feeling. That morning he had received a fresh batch of pictures, noting a full month's growth in the Hercules, the Ajax, and the Superb, since the last photographs had come. He showed them to Mrs. Pepper, who chilled him by remarking upon what a dreadful thing it was to be away from them so much. What could they ever amount to without paternal care and oversight? She said something to the effect that naval life must be quite destructive to the natural affections. She had observed with pain, she said, how easily naval families seem to bear separation. And when Mr. Bloomsbury reminded her that it was the prospect of a reunion every three years that kept them so cheerful, a reunion certain to last two years, at least, and in some fortunate instances

from ten to fifteen, she said that he was turning over a great heap of chaff to find a very small grain of comfort. Mr. Bloomsbury had a mind to try the Neutralizer on her, but as just at that moment Schopy passed his door, he turned her over to him, and she led Schopy back to the trysting place, where, like another Armada, the whole navy soon went to pieces on the rocks of their mutual dissatisfaction.

But Katie! How she seemed to enjoy this reception! How she entered into the spirit of it! Never had she looked brighter or sweeter, than on this afternoon. Such a pretty costume as she wore, and such daintiness of adjustment as there was from the obscurest flounce upon her dress to the smallest flower nestling in her hat! What blending of colors was there with her beautiful complexion; modest, but still bright hues, selected by her own good taste and arranged by her own deft hands. Yet no self-consciousness was manifest in this sweet girl, the queen, by consent, of all this reception. Had she not been the sensible little maid she was, the attention she now received might have somewhat spoiled her. Many who had seen the young people out upon their excursions around Bar Harbor now paused for an introduction; and the young men seemed determined that she should have no respite from dancing or promenading. All the cadets, excluding Joe, who was else-



where with the elderly ladies, went wild over her. Even poor little Schopy experienced a full hour's sunshine upon his usually cloud-bedimmed spirit from her beaming upon him.

And amid the bewilderments of this reception, Katie could not help observing the antics, or rather the pantomimes of "Mr. Long, coxswain of the Daybreak's dinghy." He amused her greatly. He was perched up forward among the men on a heap of gratings, his eyes fastened on her, endeavoring by every art to entice from her a recognition. But the sailor-faces around him were too thickly crowded together. Long did not receive the recognition he sought.

And if Katie, too, could only have heard him telling the apprentice boys about her, she would have discovered that she had one devotee in this world, at least. Every time she swung into his perspective, his admiration of her would break forth in a perfect torrent of exclamations.

When Joe's eyes fell upon Katie, he came near betraying his secret. She had never seemed such a vision of beauty to him before. He received her at the gang-way as she came on board and escorted her to the cabin, in use as a cloak-room. His old hateful confusion dominated him. And it seemed to him, also, that there must be such an air of restraint about him! The few words he spoke to her as they walked toward the cabin

were a miserable failure. Though Katie was the picture of health, he persisted in asking her if she were really quite well. And once he looked up into the sky, as cloudless as her own sweet face, and inquired if she thought the weather would turn out fine that afternoon. Katie had often noted the fact that Joe's mind was subject to these meteorological attacks, and she now wondered if the real cause were not that mysterious Electric Potential. Didn't that have something to do with the weather, after all?

As Joe left Katie at the cabin door, it was with his mind fully made up that he would devote that afternoon to the old ladies. If he allowed himself to think of Katie even, presenting as she did, such a glorious picture to his eyes, all his resolutions would fly to the winds. He made a covenant with his thoughts and eyes that Katie should be to him that day as nearly non-existent as was possible for such a contiguous, animated and interesting object to become. That little wave of beauty was not going to bear Joe Bently's heart on its crest that afternoon. So Joe proceeded to make a full surrender of himself to the old ladies, becoming enthusiastic over their loveliness of character, even though he were abashed at the extravagance of appetite displayed by some of them down in the wardroom, whither he frequently conducted them for refreshments.

All went very well until Katie began to think it was time for Joe to show her a little attention. It was all very nice of him to be so attentive to those dear old ladies, not one of whom he had ever seen before, but he had a young friend on board whom he was neglecting shamefully, if not avoiding. Besides, she had never seen her auntie so radiant in all her life before; she had been in a better humor, in fact, for a number of days. What did Joe Bently mean by staying away from her so long? If anybody had been saying anything to him in the way of warning, why wasn't he as indifferent to it as herself? Since she cared nothing for what people might say, and he knew as well as she did that they were only friends, why should he take it upon himself to nip any observation like her auntie's in the bud? Katie, for several days now, had strongly inclined to the theory that somebody had given Joe a talking to, and she had been wondering if that somebody had got a piece of his mind as her auntie had of hers. But now she was beginning to think that Joe Bently wasn't such a plucky fellow, after all. What would a girl naturally think of a young man who wouldn't stand by his friendships?

Things grew worse with Katie. Joe was staying away from her intentionally. This was very plain. Not that she needed any of his attention — she had vastly more than she knew what to do

with. As she thought the matter over, the pretty fan she held in her hand became very animated, and the beautiful eyes occasionally catching a glimpse of the offending cadet, were kindled with a light that was hardly that of friendship. That cadet would get a lesson before the afternoon was over; he would wish he were swallowed up in Eagle Lake.

It was well that Joe at last came to his senses; and he did it at a very opportune moment. It was just after Katie had listened to the observations of several of the old ladies. "He's so thoroughly kind and attentive," said one; "And has such engaging qualities," observed another; "And is so strikingly handsome," said a third; "And will make such a splendid officer," remarked a fourth. So it went on till Katie saw that Joe was a hero with the old ladies, at least. There was another thing about it, too. She had discovered that Joe Bently was making a decided impression upon almost everybody. She saw that the handsome, manly cadet was much admired as he moved quietly about, entertaining those not so much accustomed to such gratuities from young men on occasions like this. Therefore Katie did not know but that she might be brought to forgive Joe, if he should humbly sue for pardon.

And this he did. When, at last, he could keep away from Katie no longer, he presented himself

before her in great self-abasement. His sincere apology, and it was sincere, for he was completely under Katie's spell again, was accepted, and Katie allowed him to lead her away from a very pleasant group of admirers.

Mrs. Pepper at once, it was noticed, made a chaperonic move toward them, but Katie was too quick for her. She and Joe were in too close proximity with Enoch Long for that lady to venture showing herself as a third party. Mrs. Pepper had apprehended the fact that her presence moved Long to grotesque behavior. Katie only stopped short of the mast. This was done that she might get out of Mrs. Pepper's way and speak a word to Dawson. She had caught a glimpse of him among the spectators forward.

Joe motioned to him to come aft, which he did, smiling all over and blushing as well. How his eyes sparkled as Katie gave him her hand! This was the second time she had shaken hands with him. Dawson was such a glorious old sailor she could hardly help doing so. Besides, she saw it gave him pleasure, and she was glad to bestow upon him this consideration. She inquired very kindly after his little interests, and when she dismissed him, he seemed to go forward treading on something different from solid oak and pine. He went about radiant with smiles, muttering to himself, "Natur has the fixin' o' these things, arter

all. She's the rummiest little clipper I ever seed. An' didn't they look han'some, a standin' there together? Mr. Bently'll be capen o' that pooty craft, or Dicky Dawson don't know the difference atwixt a clew-jigger an' a spanker out-haul."

As Katie and Joe turned from Dawson, Katie saw that her auntie had made straight for the trysting place, and she held it with a look which plainly said, it can not be sub-let. But neither Katie nor Joe wanted it. Trysting places are not so much for friends! So they promenaded back and forth along the deck.

"Joe," asked Katie, after they had got well started, "is your mother really quite ill?"

"Why, no," said Joe; "she isn't ill at all. What put that into your head?"

"Mr. Edgerton said it must be your mother's illness that kept you from joining our party."

What might be called an extremely red smile came out upon Joe's face. He saw that Harry had been making excuses for him. He was not sorry. One thing about Harry was, that however much he might abuse him to his face, he stood by him to almost any degree of evasion behind his back. He therefore told Katie now that his mother had been ill a month or two before, and he supposed that Harry had that in mind in what he said to her. And he added, perhaps in vindication of his strange behavior, "of course one wants to

see his mother after she has been ill, even more than when she was ill."

"We were all so disappointed, Joe. Maud and I hoped our party wouldn't be broken up till you leave Bar Harbor, you know. And papa is more disappointed than anybody. He wanted so much for you to see the *Celeste* upon the ocean."

"What's the matter with me, anyway?" said Joe to himself. "For the last week I haven't had the reasoning powers of a pickerel. Why under heaven couldn't I have let myself alone as a protégé, and not been such an idiot?"

"If your mother isn't ill, why can't you defer your visit till after we get back?" continued Katie. "It would be so nice to have you with us, Joe. Won't you come?"

Was Joe Bently's heart made of stone that he could resist such an appeal as this? And was his pride, too, so rock-like that it could not yield? Joe was, indeed, so proud that of his own volition he never would have recalled what he had done. But what should he do now? Here was Katie looking right up into his red face and holding with the gentlest pressure in the world to his arm. Never before had she seemed so kindly his friend.

All Joe's wonderful firmness forsook him. He was a mere reed under Katie's touch. He now did the most audacious thing of his whole life. He glanced down at the sweet little girl beside him,

and with a look on his face such as Katie had never seen there before, he asked, "Do you really want me to go, Katie?"

And turning her pretty eyes away from Joe, and blushing as he had never seen her do before, she answered, "Why, you foolish fellow, of course I do."



## CHAPTER XXIII.

### KATIE'S GOLDEN LILY OF A YACHT.

THE arrangements had all been completed. Our party, not a member short, have assembled on board the *Celeste*. In the early morning they will go out with the land breeze which is expected to spring up for their especial benefit. The beautiful yacht will then spread her broad wings and be gone. She is weary of harbor idleness and luxury, and longs for the wide ocean where she may disport herself at will. A strange disquiet has seemed to hold her in possession for days. She has ridden uneasily upon the stately swells marching leisurely up the bay, tugging and straining at her anchors, and rolling from side to side as if enraged because they would not let her go. And when at times strong winds have driven white-topped seas against her bows, she has caught their foaming crests in her very teeth, as it were, and thrown herself champing upon her cables, like a noble steed upon his bit in spirited anger.

And now morning had come—a magnificent dawn. At the first gray streaks of light, Captain

Schonberg, the master of the *Celeste*, anxious as any for a run at sea, is on deck waiting for the first light air to stir to get the yacht under way. Before the sun is risen, a land breeze has in truth sprung up and is gently drawing down the bay. Captain Schonberg smiles at this fair promise of a good offing. Many a league, with this breeze, will the *Celeste* toss off, he says to himself, before she deviates a single point from her plotted path.

The click of the windlass, the straining of sheets and halyards, the shuffling of feet upon the deck, bring our young people, even at the break of day, tumbling out of their state-rooms to see how well the yacht can get away.

And how keenly alive they are to the sights and sounds around them. They watch the busy fishermen getting off their smacks, listen to the calls of the sea-birds among the adjacent rocks, look with delight upon the leaping of the fish into the first silvery light that falls upon the sea—their struggles, Katie says, to get to heaven. They never knew the joy that is in such things before.

But the morning itself! What shall be said of that? They have talked about the wondrous sunsets of Bar Harbor, but only two of them, Joe and Harry—and they under compulsion of the morning watch—had ever before seen a Bar Harbor sunrise. What radiance and beauty now kindled beneath its

touch! The cottage windows flashed and burned like beaten gold. Each rock and tree and plot of green, and breadths of mist stretching across the hills like Jupiter's bands—each object, from the granite curbing of the shores to the majestic mountain tops, was illuminated by a wonderful splendor. What raptures our young people went into over this vision! What analysis of its fair colors they made! What delicate, elusive features of its beauty they sought out! They were charmed and thrilled by this exquisite morning—bright har-binger, as they thought, of the pleasures awaiting them out on the broad, blue sea.

The yacht is under way at last. She has caught the freshening breeze with her head sails and swung round before the wind. The larger sails are quickly spread, and she starts off at a steady, handsome pace. She cuts the shining water like a great white bird—a beautiful vision of snowy sails and stretching cordage. It is a joyful setting forth, and not till Egg Rock Light has dropped astern, do the little group disperse—Joe and Harry, as they say, to fetch a wink of sleep, for this is an old story to them—before the yachtsman's day begins.

And that day with our young people began right merrily. The eight o'clock breakfast detained them in the cabin only a few minutes. The sea and sky and now dissolving shores quickly

summoned them out on deck. No dull or idle minute would be spent upon this cruise. There was too much to see, to talk about, to do, for a moment of the precious time to be wasted or misappropriated. They were out, as it were, upon a new world; that would soon appear, from the vast solitude around them, a world of which the *Celeste* was sole queen.

And whoever with any enthusiasm for the sea, any love of its science, any profound sense of its beauty, could find it a desert place! What life tenants it! What forces slumber in its bosom! What mystery broods over it! It seems quite the all of earth. The land itself appears only an obtrusion into its wide domain, permitted by some kindly spirit dwelling in its bosom to hold its occidental place. So, with imaginations kindled by these thoughts and many others, and eyes filled with the beauty of the morning, and hearts all aglow with happy anticipations, our young people cast loose from Bar Harbor and committed themselves, as they believed, to the kindly sea.

Time would fail us to follow in detail the occupations and pastimes of the first few days. Indeed, everything to our young people was play. The weather was glorious. The ocean seemed an infinite harbor upon which the eternal peace of heaven rested. There was scarcely wind enough to make a ripple upon its surface. The second day out

the Celeste did not log twenty miles. But every minute of the time was pleasantly spent. Of course it was the same old routine of life at sea: picking up sails, signaling some chance yacht, watching for the sea serpent—and being almost willing to give testimony under oath that it was in full view from the Celeste's deck—fishing when the yacht lay becalmed, hauling on ropes and taking a trick at the wheel just for the fun of playing sailor. All these and multitudinous other things filled the hours of each day, making them all too short. If young ladies could only go to sea in a man-of-war, Joe and Harry thought, they would not exchange places with a king.

And none seemed quite so occupied as Joe and Katie. In the first place Captain Schonberg made Joe the Celeste's navigator, and Joe chose Katie for his assistant, as was the most natural thing in the world to do. Katie wanted to learn navigation, and here was a most excellent opportunity. So together they went to work. Katie helped Joe wind the chronometers each morning, marked time for him when he took his time-sights, aided him whenever he found an azimuth of the sun for compass correction, and was a very apt and enthusiastic little assistant. In return for her fidelity Joe taught her how to get a meridian attitude and to take a time-sight. To make it of still greater interest, every evening they took a "lunar" to-

gether. Up to this time, it may be said, Katie had never known that the moon had such practical uses.

It was not long, therefore, before she was able to find the yacht's position for herself. She was very proud of this. It had been such a mystery before Joe's ready explanations somewhat cleared it up. But it was such a wonder still! It seemed so strange that a mere speck like the *Celeste* could start off and find her way around the globe as easily as a bird can find its nest; that there should be no need of index finger, ship's trail, footprints of travel to guide her path. Katie's sense of wonder made her a great enthusiast in this work of navigation, and Joe's interest in the science was somehow marvelously revived.

On each bright day Joe would rig a studio for Katie out on deck. For Katie had a great work on hand. It was no less than making a crayon sketch of Dawson, and for this purpose Dawson was among the yacht's crew forward, their radiant guest.

When Joe told him he was to go along with them in the *Celeste*, Dawson burst out, "That little gal's at the bottom o' this. What she can see in a old barnacle like I be, knocks me out."

"She sees a good deal in you, Dawson, as we all do," remarked Joe.

"She must a seen somethin' in me, or she'd

never a shook hands like that," observed Dawson, a film gathering in his eyes. "It was jest like layin' a sprig o' orange blossoms on a bunch o' oakum," he added, looking at his big brown hand.

But when Katie, on board the *Celeste*, told him she would like him to give her a sitting every day, it seemed to both frighten and amuse him. "O, no, Miss!" he remonstrated; "I's nothin' but a rough old sailor as'll soon be shark's bait; I's fit fur no pictur fur you. It 'ud be like wastin' yer time a stuffin' gulls."

"O, no, it wouldn't, Mr. Dawson!" said Katie. "You're the best subject I know of. You're so unique."

"Not a-sayin' as I knows what that word means, Miss, but if ye sees anythin' like that in me, I's at yer service. Ye can paint me or scalp me," he added, struck by the humor of the situation.

So Katie had Dawson before her an hour each day for several mornings. He looked awkward and ridiculous enough sitting all around the edge of his chair, holding on to his knees as if he had fallen overboard and something had been thrown out to him to hang on to. But, notwithstanding his diffidence, he enjoyed Katie's work, and a very creditable crayon grew under her hand.

And thus passed several days. It seemed that the cruise was destined to be uneventful. This

mere idle flopping of the sails with not a capful of wind in them was becoming monotonous, to the young people, at least. They were getting tired of soft delicate clouds, bright blue skies and lovely tints — they wanted a change.

One evening as they all sat out on deck, as was their custom, they experienced a slight mental, if not meteorological, disturbance. It was occasioned by a remark of Harry's.

"Call this going to sea!" he exclaimed, jumping up from his chair and taking a look around the horizon. "This is the most grandmotherly business I ever heard of on the Atlantic Ocean."

"Mercy on us!" exclaimed Mrs. Pepper, "what would you have?"

"A rattling gale of wind."

"You frighten me," she returned, looking at Harry as if she suspected him of being another Moses who had only to stretch forth his hands in order that a "strong east wind" might blow. "Don't tempt Providence, I beg of you," she pleaded, "with this unlucky yacht."

"Sarah," said Mrs. Aston abruptly, "you will please say no more."

"Whoever heard of such flying in the face of Providence?" continued Mrs. Pepper, utterly ignoring Mrs. Aston. "I should as soon think of putting a child's eyes out when it was born as naming a yacht the Celeste."



"It's a very pretty name," said Katie, a little resentfully.

"I believe in the luck of unluck, you know," laughed Mr. Aston.

"I don't want to risk my life," pursued Mrs. Pepper, "all on account of an unlucky name. I wish I'd staid at the West End."

Mrs. Aston looked as if she wished, too, that she had staid at the West End; and Katie looked, Joe thought, as if she could cheerfully contemplate Mrs. Pepper, secure from all earthly danger, in some quiet grotto of the sea, ten thousand fathoms down.

"What in the world does she mean?" asked Maud, who was none too bold a sailor.

"Oh! she refers to a ship, named the Mary Celeste, that was found abandoned at sea," replied Mr. Aston, in brief explanation.

"To think you should have given this yacht that name, Franklin," said Mrs. Pepper, most dismally.

"Half my vessels are named after unlucky ships," said Mr. Aston, "and they're the luckiest I have."

Mr. Aston possessed one oddity. It showed itself in a number of ways. He liked to sit with thirteen at table, to go to sea on Friday, and to name his vessels after unlucky ones. He believed there was luck in all this. He was very proud of

his yacht's name, standing out for it even against Katie, who wanted to call her the "Golden Lily."

"I would like to hear about the Mary Celeste, sir," said Joe. "It must be very interesting."

"It's very startling," said Mrs. Aston.

"And very prophetic," said Mrs. Pepper.

"Is it about a haunted ship?" asked Maud, peering uneasily into the shadows gathering upon the yacht.

"O, no!" laughed Katie, "it isn't a ghost story at all. There's no ghost story that can compare with it."

"Perhaps you'd better not tell it, Franklin," observed Mrs. Aston, looking inquiringly at Maud.

"Oh! let him tell it," said Maud, "I'm dying to hear it."

"Well," laughed Mr. Aston, "we all need shaking up a little. We won't get it out of the weather—that's a sure case; so we'll take the next best thing."

"Franklin," said Mrs. Pepper solemnly, "do you see that cloud gathering on the horizon? There's trouble brewing for this yacht."

"Please let papa tell his story, Auntie," said Katie, not unamiably, but a little peremptorily.

"To begin with," said Mr. Aston, "it's the strangest story in all the annals of the sea. I got it direct from the State Department at

Washington, where it is on record. The *Mary Celeste* was found forsaken at sea under the most peculiar circumstances. She was owned in New York and was bound for Villefranche-sur-Mer, France, with a valuable cargo. About three hundred miles west of Gibraltar, she was sighted by an Italian bark."

"O, papa! I beg your pardon," said Katie, "but it was a German vessel."

"You are right, Katie; it was a German bark named the *Dei Gratia*. She signaled the stranger, and to her surprise got no answer. It was so very mysterious that the captain bore down upon her and made a close examination with the ship's glasses. But not a sign of life was visible about the deck. The captain then determined to board her. Manning a boat with a picked crew, he, himself, started in charge. As they came alongside they gave a loud halloo, hoping to attract attention. It was like calling to the sea. They had found an abandoned ship."

Here Mr. Aston paused, and looked about among his listeners.

"The captain and his men," he resumed, "clambered quickly over the side, and proceeded to make a thorough search. Never were men more startled. Here was a deserted ship, and not the ghost of a reason could they discover for her desertion. Everything was in its place. It seemed

that the crew must be hiding from their strange visitors. No; they explored every part of the vessel, and not even a mouse could they discover. It was as though the *Mary Celeste* was manned by an invisible crew, for everything was as snug and safe as with us this minute."

"H'm! safe as with us this minute," repeated Mrs. Pepper.

"Not a boat was away from her davits. Chronometers, compasses, charts, all the navigation instruments were where they belonged. The mates' watches hung in their state-rooms, the money chest was untouched. Not a thing, in short, had been removed from the ship, and everything was in perfect order. But the thirteen people who had been on board—not a trace of them could be found."

"That fatal number!" put in Mrs. Pepper; "I never knew it to fail," and she at once appeared as though she were bestowing numerical attention upon the *Celeste*.

"Whatever it was that happened must have occurred at dinner time," continued Mr. Aston, paying no attention to the interruption. "A half-eaten meal was found in the cabin, and also upon the men's mess table. Oh! that reminds me. In one corner of the cabin was a sewing machine with a child's garment still under the needle. A woman's thimble stood upon one

corner of the machine just as the owner had placed it when called to dinner. It was afterwards ascertained that the captain had his wife and child with him."

"It's all so strange," said Maud, evidently not relishing this weird story.

"What was done with the vessel, sir?" asked Harry, who had been all absorbed in Mr. Aston's account.

"A prize crew was put on board, who took her to Gibraltar. The English Consul there gave the affair a searching investigation, but no light was thrown upon it."

"Perhaps they were overhauled by pirates, sir," said Ned.

"That is altogether improbable. In that case the money and other valuables would have been gone; and there would surely have been signs of resistance."

"Could it have been a case of poisoning?" asked Harry. "I've heard of such things."

"That was suggested in the inquiry at Gibraltar. It was thought that the cook, in a fit of rage or insanity, might have poisoned the whole ship's company, and then, driven by remorse or insanity, committed suicide. On the strength of this, the food which had been found on the tables, and carefully preserved, was analyzed; but it was entirely free from poison."

"Maybe the vessel was haunted, after all," said Maud, with wide-open eyes, "and they didn't dare to stay on her."

Everybody but Mrs. Pepper laughed at Maud's suggestion.

"But there were all the boats secure at the davits," said Mr. Aston. "No," he continued, "there is absolutely no tenable theory. Pirates and murder are out of the question. Not a trace of blood could be found, and not a sign of robbery. There was no more marks of struggle than two kittens would make playing about the deck or in the cabin. They did find an old sword with a few spots on it, which at first were thought to be blood, but chemical analysis showed them to be ordinary rust."

"Surely, sir, there must have been some slight clue?" remarked Joe, intent upon constructing a theory of this wonderful case.

"It might just be mentioned," said Mr. Aston, who was familiar with every detail of the investigation, "that a barrel of alcohol was found tapped."

"That's the solution," said Joe triumphantly.

"But there are insuperable difficulties here," argued Mr. Aston. "If the captain and his family had been killed, there would have been signs of murder. Then those who committed the deed would not have drowned themselves by wholesale; and if they fled from the vessel there is the diffi

culty with the boats again. No; this case is without a parallel. Not so much as a hint has been given as to the fate which befell this ship's company. The questions to this day are, Why was she deserted? and, What became of her people? The State Department took the matter up, directing United States representatives abroad to be on the lookout for information respecting the missing ones. But the mystery is still unsolved. There, you have the story of the *Mary Celeste*."

"Not by any means," ejaculated Mrs. Pepper. "She was afterwards wrecked."

"Sarah," said Mrs. Aston sharply, "we've had enough of the *Mary Celeste*."

Each drew a long breath. The story had been thrilling, and unlike many thrilling stories, true to the letter. Maud had been somewhat frightened, but was now reassured by the ridicule which Mr. Aston proceeded to heap upon superstitions of the sea. He laughed at such things; and Katie, to no little extent, had imbibed his notions. Still no one was enthusiastic over his strange fancy for naming his yacht after the luckless ship; and even Harry indulged a secret wish that that coveted gale, should it come, might be tempered to these shorn lambs; shorn of many of their pretty conceits touching the beautiful *Celeste*.

In a few minutes, however, the hapless *Mary Celeste* was quite out of mind. Katie had gone

to the piano, and through the open cabin doors and skylights now floated the strains of a lively waltz. Everybody but Joe, who was left without a partner, went into a grand whirl about the deck. Mr. and Mrs. Aston, Harry and Maud, and, can we believe it, Ned and Mrs. Pepper, rotated themselves into a spirit of giddy jollity. Nor was sobriety fairly established until they bade one another good-night, and withdrew to their respective state-rooms.

Before turning in Joe went out on deck to have a word with Dawson. Being able to sleep as long as he pleased, Dawson spent half of each night with the watch on deck. Joe found him now leaning over the rail, intently studying the sky and sea. The night was as beautiful as any that had preceded it. A slight swell, however, was working up from the southward, to which the yacht was gently dipping. A bank of cirro-stratus clouds lay low upon the horizon, its upper edge thinning into broad sheets, which were slowly stretching across the sky. There was not even a breath of wind; not so much as a cat's-paw could be seen upon the water. But for the dip of the yacht Joe would have scarcely known they were out upon the ocean. The stillness was almost oppressive. The empty sails clung to the masts like a swimmer's garments around his body.

"We's goin' to ketch it, sir," observed Dawson.



"Catch what?" asked Joe.

"Bad weather, sir."

"I see no signs of it, Dawson."

"Signs enough, sir," said Dawson, shaking his head ominously.

"What are they?" asked Joe, quite as confident of the accuracy of Dawson's predictions as of those of the Weather Bureau at Washington.

"When you sees the sun a-settin', sir, with them gaudy colors like a boy a-showin' a pocket full o' new marbles, you must stan' by; it's the wust o' signs."

"The sunset was remarkably brilliant," said Joe, "but they've been so this season."

"An' when you hears people a-talkin' like you all did to-night, sir, it's allers the percusser o' storms," added Dawson with great solemnity.

"Oh! I guess not," laughed Joe.

"It's a curus phonomoly o' the sea, sir; it allers fetches it," Dawson went on.

"I wouldn't have believed you so superstitious, Dawson," said Joe, no little amused.

"Long insperience has gim'me my own notions o' things, sir."

Joe's sleep that night was unbroken. When morning came, the first thing he looked for was a change of weather. The only perceptible change was an increase in the swell he had noticed the preceding night, and an inclination on the part of

the little wind they had to haul ahead. The yacht lay close up to the wind, cutting the water beautifully at a speed of four or five knots. The routine of that day went on quite spiritedly, but toward evening there were indications that they might get a shaking up even from the weather. Banks of heavy gray clouds hung upon the southern horizon, which, as the darkness deepened, were lit up weirdly and grandly by incessant flashes of lightning. The sea became brilliant with phosphorescent light, a sort of detained lightning. Katie fairly clapped her hands in ecstasy over the intense blue of the water, brought into fine relief by the myriad stars — a nether firmament — kindled along the track of the *Celeste*. Katie's exclamation was, "Splendidly beautiful!" But with all this the wind was rising, and the barometer going down.

It was now evident to all that the glorious weather was at an end. It had burned out, as it were, at sunset, like the last piece in a splendid pyrotechnic display. Maud felt certain that the bad luck of the *Mary Celeste* was on their track. Mrs. Pepper was absolutely frightened, and inclined to take shelter under Joe's wing. "Oh! Mr. Bently," she cried, almost snuggling up to him, "what shall we do if it turns out a hurricane?"

"Make things snug, and hold on for dear life," laughed Joe.

"How can you laugh with only a plank between you and eternity?" said Mrs. Pepper.

"But only think of the thickness of that plank," replied Joe.

By ten o'clock a moderate gale was blowing, and a heavy sea running. Mr. Aston gave orders to clap on sail and run for sea-room. All that night the yacht seemed to revel in the changed conditions, and by morning had made a remarkable run. Mr. Aston wanted her to have free rein to see what she could do. She stood up to her work magnificently, leaping over the sea as gracefully as a dolphin. It seemed her delight to thus grapple with the elements, and everybody but Maud and Mrs. Pepper was charmed with her. They would have given the gold of the world, had they possessed it, could they have felt once more the solid earth beneath their feet.

All went well until noon. Then there were unmistakable signs of a heavy blow. Joe found the yacht's position, by dead reckoning, to be three hundred and fifty miles from the coast, a safe distance. As he went forward to report this to Captain Schonberg, he saw that the captain looked very grave; so much so, indeed, that he asked him if he were concerned about the weather.

"It's a bad outlook, Mr. Bently," the captain replied. "We may thank our stars if we get out of it with whole skins."

"What! is it any more than an ordinary gale, sir?" inquired Joe, somewhat alarmed.

"Much more. It's a cyclonic disturbance."

Scarcely had Captain Schonberg uttered these words than there came such a burst of wind upon the yacht that she was thrown nearly upon her beam ends. But this was trifling compared with the accident which happened at Joe's very side. With a loud noise a block carried away aloft, and in its descent struck Captain Schonberg senseless to the deck.

Instantly all was confusion. The ladies, all of whom, excepting Maud, who was safely boarded in in her bunk, were on deck clinging to the weather rigging, gave a frightened scream, and the whole crew were seized with a panic. Joe sprang to Captain Schonberg's assistance. For the moment the yacht was forgotten, and was left floundering almost helpless in the hollow of the seas. But her extremity was quickly seen by Mr. Aston. As Joe bent to raise the prostrate captain, his voice reached him, calling loudly, "Bently, Bently, take command."

Mr. Aston had no knowledge of practical seamanship, but he was well aware of the gravity of the situation. And fortunate for them all was it, that the cool-headed, dauntless Joe Bently was on board. The owner of the *Celeste* saw that he was the one to step into Captain Schonberg's

shoes. And right royally did he fill them. Instantly the speaking trumpet was at his lips, and a succession of sharp orders rang out above the roar of wind and sea. Presently, the gallant, obedient little Celeste was riding in comparative quiet upon the now huge seas, hove to as skillfully as though our youthful skipper were Captain Schonberg himself.

And this was but the beginning. Word soon came from Captain Schonberg's room, where he had been removed, that he was too seriously hurt to return to the deck. Joe was left in command. Here was the emergency of his life. He fairly trembled at the thought of it. Nobody but himself and the injured captain knew the nature of this storm. And well Joe knew what to expect from it. It would be no new experience to him. But one thought was now present with him — how to evade the vortex of this cyclone. He knew its terrible danger — so quiet one moment that the flame of a candle would not flicker in it, the next concentrating all the furies of the skies.

What he did must be done quickly. There was not even time for consultation with Harry and Dicky Dawson. First of all, he must determine at what point in the storm's path the yacht now lay. This was quickly ascertained. Presently the wind veered to the south, and the barometer made a rapid descent. Applying the well-known rule,

Joe now saw that the bearing of the cyclone's center was eight points of the compass from the direction in which the wind was blowing, or due east.

Having thus determined the bearing of the vortex or center, he shortly came to two conclusions—the one very pleasant, and the other extremely startling. The yacht was at a comparatively safe distance from the storm center, but she was on the right hand side of the storm, in its most dangerous semicircle. And he also discovered that he had hove the yacht to on the wrong tack.

Another succession of ringing orders, and the yacht in quick time, came handsomely round on the starboard tack. Upon this tack her course would be away from the dreaded center, and she would keep coming up into the wind as it might veer from time to time, without danger of being taken aback. And thus hove to she would remain quite stationary while the storm was passing by. She now lay comparatively easy under double-reefed foresail.

The yacht snug, Joe began his precautionary work. He told Dawson that when the storm should be at its height, he wanted him at the wheel. Harry was to look after things below, and to stand by to assist on deck if his presence should be required there. Joe then ordered storm stay-

sails and pendant tackles to be broken out. With the pendant tackles he set men at work strengthening the rigging. The storm staysails were made ready to take the place of the canvas the yacht now carried, should it be blown away. At the last minute, he bethought him of tarpaulins, to be placed in the rigging to keep the yacht up in the wind, should it become impossible to carry any sail at all. This done, everything was securely battened down. Joe expected that some of the hills now tumbling up to an alarming height, would soon insist upon coming on board. And everything snug, he felt somewhat as a daring rider might feel bestride a wild mustang, secure beneath him with solid bit and girths.

But for what followed, the most invincible courage was necessary. Swiftly the storm came on. Fearfully it whirled upon its awful axis. There are those who recall this dreadful tempest, and know that words cannot exaggerate its terrific aspects. Joe stood appalled. Such pitching and writhing, such frightful roaring, such awful revelry of winds, such mighty tramping of seas, struck terror even to his brave heart. Sheets parted like slender threads, with the noise of a cannon, the foresail was blown away, the great waves clambered over the bows, and the little yacht seemed wallowing about in frenzied drunkenness. Each instant it was as though she were

taking her last plunge, to disappear forever. Surely some Nemesis was pursuing the struggling Celeste to her destruction.

And the yacht would have surely foundered, but for a thought which came upon Joe like an inspiration. Those mountain seas, thundering around her, as it were, gnashing their teeth upon her, could be held in leash. Their power could be curbed and broken; in their presence the yacht could be as safe as a child before a caged lion. Thanks to modern discovery, though it cannot hush the winds, it can yet still the tumult of the waves.

Joe's happy thought was what has brought comfort and hope to many a despairing mariner's heart. Two fire buckets were quickly brought on deck and thickly perforated with little holes at the bottom. They were then filled with oakum, and the oakum was saturated with oil to the buckets' brim. A daring young fellow among the crew, rigged an arrangement out over the bows and suspended them above the sea.

The effect was magical. Had the yacht that moment burst into the center of the cyclone, where instantaneous calm had fallen, the waves would not have dropped so suddenly. As the film of oil spread out upon the water, it bore the great billows down as though crushed beneath ponderous weights.



Joe had often pictured to himself mountains moving at the word of faith, the lapsing of Genesaret's waves at the Master's command; and now he seemed standing in the presence of a visible miracle. It filled him with a solemn, sacred awe, repeating, as it seemed to do, nature's obedience to a will above her own. A conquering spirit seemed brooding over the waters, and the monster waves, at its filmy touch, had fallen to the quiet and beauty of harbor undulations. The ocean, amid its awful tempestuousness, seemed to have found a tender, sheltering spot in its own bosom, where this terror-stricken yacht's company might be at rest.

The Celeste was saved; and vessel never entered port bearing more grateful hearts than beat in the bosoms of our young mariners, as still under Joe Bently's command, the gallant little yacht, a few days later, came again up to her anchorage at Bar Harbor. And never did greater hero come in from the sea than our brave cadet, to one, at least, in Katie's "Golden Lily" of a yacht.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### THE RISING YOUNG LAWYER.

WINTER has again fallen upon our Northern hemisphere. The *Celeste*, dismantled and housed over, is laid up in forlorn waiting for another season. And the *Daybreak*—where is she? With all speed she is making her way over summer seas to a new and distant station. She is under the Southern Cross, which, with the awful coal sack—the end of the universe—is nightly Joe Bently's wonder and study. She is ordered to the Pacific; and henceforth our cadets will make their yachting trips from Patagonia to San Francisco, and from San Francisco to the ends of the earth.

The *Daybreak's* orders to this far-off station were, of course, a surprise and a disappointment. The faith of her officers and crew in her ultimate assignment to the European squadron had been implicit and unquestioning. But the Navy Department said otherwise, and the *Daybreak* was to complete her cruise on what might be termed the watery side of our planet.

When the news was received the ship had a look of bereavement. Schopy abstained from every form of nutrition for one whole day, remaining in his hammock; Hubbins did the subject justice; Mr. Bloomsbury, of course, smiled over it all, but Joe caught him gazing at the Neutralizer; Mr. Moncrief at once went on a short leave of absence, permitting the cadets to shamefully neglect their journals; and one or two uttered vague threats of marching the whole United States upon the Navy Department to demand the revocation of the ship's orders or their own. It was a wicked injustice, they claimed, to send them so far away from aged relatives, some of whom had attained their fifty-fifth year. If the Navy Department had no feeling, the hearts of senators were not destitute of sympathy; they would not suffer this thing.

But it was really surprising to see how soon cheerfulness was restored on board the Daybreak. Before a week had elapsed nearly everybody was in favor of the Pacific station. Not a few declared that they would not go to Europe, if they had the chance. It was a very much overrated station. Everybody knew somebody who had been on the Pacific, and who said that Europe was not to be mentioned beside it. Then, would they not fetch up in San Francisco once in two years, to spend a month at least? And that would be going home.

So they took what comfort they could out of it. And on the edge of winter they kissed wives and children and sisters and mothers and sweethearts a long farewell — only He who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand knowing how long — and the Daybreak sailed away.

While Joe proceeds to his station, we will linger behind with his friends : or, more specifically, his friend.

Katie has two visits on hand this winter ; the first, to Mrs. Pepper in Providence, and the second, to Miss Maud in Boston. Mrs. Pepper had managed to “make up” with Katie. She had implored her forgiveness for her ill-advised and unkind statements, and Katie had freely and heartily forgiven her. She told Katie that it was her deep and undying interest in her which had led her, she now saw, to go too far, and she was very sorry for what had taken place. “You know, dear,” she went on to say, “your welfare is as near my heart as that of an own daughter would be, had Providence vouchsafed me the sweet gift bestowed upon your parents.”

A wicked little doubt as to any excess of sweetness that might have been mingled in the visionary being to whom Mrs. Pepper alluded came into Katie’s mind, but of course she kept it to herself. She found that her aunt held quite a tender place in her heart, after all. It would take too long to

tell how this had been brought about, but it may be said that an apparent change in Mrs. Pepper toward Joe Bently had its due effect upon Katie.

But had Mrs. Pepper given up her plan concerning Katie? By no means. It retained its life amid the most adverse conditions. It had the vitality of an uneradicated thistle root. Her plan seemed to have been destroyed at the top a dozen times, but there was plenty of vigor left at the bottom. "What's the heart of a young girl?" said Mrs. Pepper to herself. "It can shift its affections with hardly a whimper, like a black and tan terrier." And with Joe Bently half the sphere distant, she flattered herself that Katie's heart would soon be pattering round after her friend of the law as quietly and obediently as though he led it by a string. She therefore wheedled Katie into making that promised visit.

But what is the condition of Katie's friendship for Joe? Has it undergone any change? Yes, it is quite a different thing from what it was before the Celeste's memorable cruise. Joe had come back Katie's hero, and his reward, like that of all heroes from the world's beginning, was something stronger than friendship. Katie could no longer disguise the fact from herself that her heart belonged to Joe. But her hand? That was a different matter. Hearts and hands are so different, we know. People so often possess the heart without

the hand ; and the hand without the heart. If Katie's heart were conquered, her hand would have to be won ; and toward winning her hand Joe Bently has not taken a single step. Katie did not know what it was that held Joe back. She was inclined to think it was a faint heart. He could be brave as a lion in a tempest, counted his life as nothing in the face of duty, but in this affair he seemed the rawest recruit she had ever heard of ; there wasn't a particle of the hero about him.

Had Katie known of the war that was raging in Joe's breast, how different it would have been ! His love for her and his conviction of duty to her parents, as we know, have been waging incessant warfare within him, and his stern sense of duty had so far won the day. Had Katie known this, she might have helped Joe out of some of his difficulties. As it was, this cadet must humbly and persistently woo her. If she was essential to his happiness, he must not be afraid to risk his all in gaining that happiness, as she had been taught that good things are sometimes to be won.

And did Katie know Joe's secret ? Certainly she did. And she had known it ever since it took that little leap across her path on the day of the reception. And after that she had caught not a few glimpses of it, as it darted quite unconsciously to Joe from its hiding-place, like some small creature

of the woods. Secrets of the heart, we know, like the little nimble-footed creatures of the brush, will keep glimpsing into view. Coverts of the heart abound in open spaces. And Katie now knew what was in Joe's heart.

But was Joe still ignorant of what had taken place with Katie? Somewhat so. He had noted a few things in her which led him to suspect that she did not altogether regard him in the light of that poor, but worthy young man. There was more warmth in her manner toward him, and ever since he had brought the yacht safely back to Bar Harbor, he had observed a disposition in her to make much of what he had done. He told her that anybody, with a good knowledge of seamanship, could have done all that he did, but Katie would not be convinced. Neither would any of the rest of them, for that matter, unless it was Mrs. Pepper, and her views on the subject were not asked for. Harry, it may be said, declared that Joe, by his skill and bravery, had saved the lives of all of them, and this had been the general conviction on board the yacht. But Joe, in his modesty, felt that he was receiving undeserved praise, and this he stoutly maintained, whenever Katie or anybody else undertook to make a hero of him. Still he noticed that the yachting expedition had somehow been a turning point with Katie in her conduct toward him. If nothing

more, it was evident to him now that he had risen greatly in her esteem. And he sometimes thought he might even win the love of this young girl, after all that had taken place. However, he made no conscious effort to do so. And thus things went on till the Daybreak was ordered to Norfolk to get ready for her new station. Slowly but surely the hearts of these young people had been knit together, but no word of revelation had been spoken between them.

As a story must be told something as a seam is sewed up by hand — every stitch being in part a back stitch — it must be here asked whether Katie knew of Mrs. Pepper's real design in getting her to Providence. Katie knew absolutely nothing about it. Her aunt, to be sure, had often spoken of her young friend in her presence, but her allusions were not of a sort to awaken suspicion. From what she had said, Katie gathered that the young lawyer was the most gifted mortal that had ever appeared on this planet; that when nature shot him from her bow, her eye was on a shining mark — nothing less than the chief-justiceship of his country, or its Presidential chair, and the force of that bright shaft would not expend itself till it was securely planted in one or the other of these high offices. But granting all this, had Katie known that her auntie intended that that arrow should feather itself in its flight — such a strange



thing for an arrow to do — with her sweet little self, she would never have gone to Providence. Katie is so impracticable in all these matters! If she had been an insignificant mole-hill, which a mountain might be conceived as desiring to wed, the mountain would have been obliged to come to the mole-hill.

Katie went to Providence. While Joe Bently was gazing upon the Southern Cross, thinking of Katie, Katie was gazing upon the rising young lawyer, thinking of Joe Bently.

This young man is entitled to a little attention, for Mrs. Pepper has imposed the task upon us. He is not, perhaps, just ill-looking, but by no means is he good-looking. He is more short than tall, more square than round, more red than white. His face is thickly strown with freckles; so much so as to suggest wanton wastefulness.

But as Mrs. Pepper was once heard to say, "He's such a manly boy, you know." To conclude, we may add, that in attractiveness of person our cadet had this young lawyer at a great disadvantage. But what is the mere husk, the case, the shell, Mrs. Pepper would ask, to that which it enshrines? "Why," said she, "people forget that the glow-worm is a worm when it begins to shine." From which we must not infer that she was likening her young friend to a worm, but that she simply meant when his bright gifts once com-

menced shining his physical discouragements would be forgotten ; oblivion itself would swallow up his uncomeliness.

But the young lawyer did not impress Katie more favorably as an intellectual, than as a physical being. His mind, so far as she was able to catch glimpses of it, had an incomplete look.

Katie was not long deprived of the acquaintance and society of this young man after her arrival in Providence. She had been in her aunt's house just fifty minutes when he called to pay his respects to her. Gladly would she have taken a little rest after her journey, but Mrs. Pepper insisted that she should come down at once. As soon as the introduction was over the young people were left to themselves. Mrs. Pepper withdrew, ostensibly to superintend the preparations for dinner, not a minute less than two hours distant. Inasmuch as the young lawyer was to honor them with his presence at dinner, it was, therefore, more than likely that Katie would have him all to herself during that time. Truly fortune had smiled upon Katie !

In a social sense, to go on with this rambling description, this young man was the antithesis of Joe Bently. Generally when Joe and Katie had been together she had done the talking and he the listening ; in this case, the young lawyer did the talking and Katie the listening. In another

respect, Joe and the young lawyer differed. Only as he might be driven by stress of circumstances would Joe ever talk about himself ; and nothing, however compelling, could make this young lawyer talk about anything but himself. He seemed to regard Katie's imagination as so much sensitized paper upon which he was to print such negatives of himself as would be most flattering to his self-esteem, and most destructive of Katie's peace of mind. And he did not dally with this work, nor subject Katie to the exasperation of delay. This young man had had many conferences with Mrs. Pepper in regard to Katie. He had come to believe, stimulated by Mrs. Pepper's assurances, that all it would be necessary to do was to reach forth his hand, and Katie — tame, affectionate little bird that she was — would flutter right into his palm. In truth, this young man had a feeling that in his presence girls stood spell-bound like deer among the lily-pads in the glare of a hunter's jack. Katie had not been at her auntie's a day before Mrs. Pepper informed her that half the girls in Providence were in love with Roger (Roger was his name), which set her wondering what in the world the other half could be thinking about that they were not in love with him, too.

On his first visit, this young lawyer devoted himself chiefly to his autobiography. Katie could have repeated countless pages of it, had she next

day assigned herself such a task. She knew more about him the first fifteen minutes of their acquaintance than she had known about Joe Bently all her life. His struggles, his aspirations, his successes, his inevitable destiny were poured into Katie's ears as if they were tormented with insatiable greed. Such gilded prophecies as he uttered, touching his own future; such pictures as he drew!

Katie was disappointed, however, in what he said of the law. From what Mrs. Pepper had told her she had conceived the notion that his love for his profession was consuming him. Katie now saw that his ambition was for a political career. The law was no field for him.

His spurs were to be won in the broad domain of public affairs. The law was merely to hold the stirrup for him while he flung himself on the back of his destiny. He informed Katie that all the leadings of his mind were toward the service of the State. "Not the little, ungrowthful Rhode Island," he explained, fearing she might misapprehend his meaning, "but the State, the country." He told her that already he had begun to speak on questions of public interest and policy. Only the night before he had spoken at a large meeting. Suiting the action to the word, he smote his hands together with a clap which nearly started Katie from her chair, exclaiming, "And

the people did that! It won't be the last time, either," he added. He promised to take Katie down to hear his next speech. However, just as the young lawyer landed on the steps of the White House, after a splendid barge-like passage along the grand canal of civil preferment, the dinner-bell tinkled, and seizing his hastily-offered arm, Katie stepped from vision to reality.

Time would fail to follow in detail the attempts of this young lawyer, with Mrs. Pepper's invaluable assistance, to win the pretty Katie. Indeed, the mere acquisition of this treasure at first gave him the least concern. Before he had seen her, even, he decided that he would marry her. And the first two days of her visit at Mrs. Pepper's she was to him as a bird in the hand. After that, she was a bird in the bush, and the most aggravating little bird which fancies of his sort ever undertook to capture. He thought at first she could not see too much of him. He had told Mrs. Pepper that he wanted Miss Aston to know him thoroughly before their engagement. And Mrs. Pepper said she thought it very honorable of him. He furthermore confided to Mrs. Pepper that little by little he could break to Miss Aston the qualities he expected in a wife, and she, doubtless, being a right-minded girl, would set about preparing to fulfill his expectations. Mrs. Pepper remarked that Katie was a good girl, a little willful and perverse

at times, but, on the whole, teachable and manageable. She was likewise very tender-hearted, which the young lawyer said he was glad to know.

So he began the wooing. As we have seen, the first thing he did was to reveal to her his passion for distinction. He showed her what he was going to be. She was going to be the sharer of his renown, and she might just as well be given a sight of it first as last; though, of course, he would not permit her to know for some time her personal connection with it. He would reserve that as a delightful surprise for the near future. But it was well enough now not to conceal the triumphs and excitements of his career from the one who was to be his constant and worshipful partner in it. It was an excellent plan, he thought, to begin at once to establish a mutuality of interest between them. Then, too, it would fire and ennoble her ambition; excite an envious longing in her for participation in the transports of a bright future like his. In a word, he would make her an enthusiast over his pictured life before ever she dreamed that she was to be the *bona fide* participant in its supreme realizations. This is an accurate although an imperfect rescript of the young lawyer's mind when first he began to pay his addresses to Katie.

As to Katie, poor bewildered young thing that she was, on that first visit she could not understand the young lawyer at all. Why should she? If

she had failed to grasp the abstractions of the mathematical mind, as in the case of a naval cadet, how could she penetrate the subtleties of the legal mind, as in the case of the rising young lawyer? His motive in reposing such vast confidence in her she could not fathom. She could not see why he had assumed such an absorbing interest on her part in his career. He talked as though her one pursuit in life would be noting the fulfillment of the prophecies he uttered concerning himself. He seemed to take it for granted that her interest in him would henceforth run in as close and parallel relations with his ambition as exist between a railroad and a telegraph line. But Katie never had been able to understand young men.

However, when the young lawyer came round the next afternoon to ask Katie to walk down town with him, she would not leave the house without a chaperon. Mrs. Pepper tried to reason with the willful girl, but all to no purpose. Katie said she knew her mamma and papa expected that she should be very careful, and on no account would she displease them. Mrs. Pepper hinted that it had been very different at Bar Harbor. But Katie was slow at taking hints. In a few days Mrs. Pepper observed a strange desire on Katie's part not to be absent from her a moment when the young lawyer was in the house. The second day that Roger dined with them Mrs. Pepper withdrew,

as on the first occasion, and Katie followed her. She had often told her aunt that she enjoyed helping about dinner very much; and she now explained that if she were away from home it was no reason why she shouldn't be useful.

"But, you absurd girl — dear, I mean," said Mrs. Pepper, when they had reached the kitchen, "don't you see you're leaving Roger all alone?"

"I know, Auntie, but he brought up 'Reminiscences of a Great Public Career,' and 'How We Are Governed,' to read," innocently replied Katie.

"Isn't Roger a splendid fellow, dear?" said Mrs. Pepper, with one of her abrupt transitions.

"O, Betty! I'll mash that squash for you," exclaimed Katie, seizing the mashing instrument from the cook with the enthusiasm of a graduate from a cookery school.

"She didn't hear me," said Mrs. Pepper to herself. "The girl that gets him will secure a prize," she went on.

"That will make the girl that doesn't get him dreadfully envious," thought Katie. "Auntie," she said aloud, "how much oleo — butter, I say — do you put in this squash?"

For the next few minutes Katie was absorbed in the preparation of the squash. She seemed to have no other thought save the one in which she was engaged.

Did this young lawyer propose to Katie? Yes,



the young lawyer did propose to Katie. And before a week had passed ; it was inevitable. He was one of those rocks in the sea of life which girls like Katie are almost certain to encounter. But there had been such a fall of tide around this particular rock that Katie knew what was coming.

The young lawyer took advantage of one of Mrs. Pepper's sudden disappearances from the drawing-room to inform Katie that since he had seen her he had been wholly given over to idolatry. He had recognized in her the sun of his life. His whole being had been suffused with a light from her. He adored her. He was a fire-worshiper in his devotion to her. He prostrated himself (in metaphor) before her as an ancient Persian before the rising sun. The richness of his symbolism confused Katie. To be called a sun, a star, an idol, a superb flower, a creature of beautiful plumage as the young lawyer persisted in doing, would bewilder a girl a good deal older than Katie. But she collected herself sufficiently to tell the young lawyer that she did not fulfill his ideal in any single particular, and that while she was grateful for his high opinion of her, his good sense should teach him that a proposition of marriage to a girl away from her parents, neither of whom he had ever seen, and whose mind on the subject he knew nothing about, was hardly becoming.

But he would not give it up even then. As she

was such a bright being to him he implored her to tell him if he did not sustain the relations of a luminary to her. Katie could not be untruthful, and she promptly told him that he did not. Then this young lawyer grew very red in the face, and resolved to bring the matter to an issue.

“Will you marry me?” he said, in a most determined tone.

“No; I won’t,” said Katie, with flashing eyes, jumping up and leaving the room.

Mrs. Pepper made no scene over this. The next afternoon, however, Katie had put forty miles between herself and her aunt and the rising young lawyer. In high spirits she was dashing along the Brighton Road with Miss Maud and Ned Brentford on a magnificent sleigh-ride, all three interested in the latest news from the United States Ship Daybreak.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### IN THE HOLLOW OF HIS HAND.

IN one of the Aleutian Islands, those great fragments of our continental arm, broken in its endeavor to hold Asia in its grasp, some little distance back from a curved and pebbly beach, stands a minute village. It impresses the stranger as a brave, hardy little town, holding to its place as thriftily as the circumpolar *Sphagnum* shining so golden on the mountain slopes around it. This town consists of little more than an irregular row of single-story frame cottages, a Greek church of good size, and a fine parsonage. The parsonage adjoins the church, and at the immediate time of which we write, serves two purposes. It is the residence of the faithful priest who presides over the flock of Christians here, and a hospital as well.

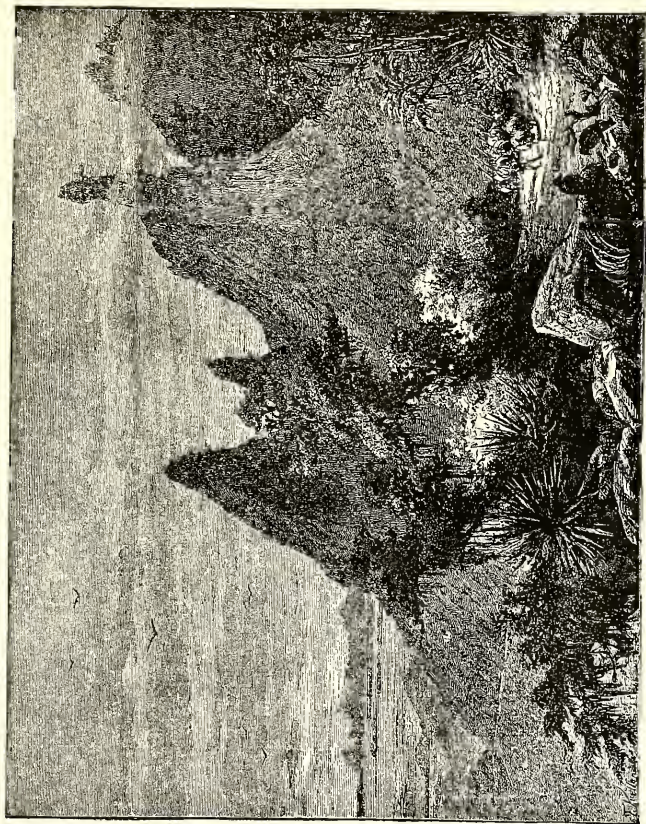
In this good priest's house the surprise of this story awaits us. For here, lying upon a little cot, just recovering from a dangerous illness, is our hero, Joe Bently. Nor is he alone among strangers. Friends are around him, devoting watchful and

loving service at his bedside. Harry, Coverly and Lieutenant Bloomsbury are temporarily domiciled here.

What strange fortune has brought them to this far-off shore? Does the little Daybreak lie quietly at anchor before the town? We look in vain for her familiar spars and smokestack in the harbor; listen in vain for some shouted order, shrill note of boatswain's whistle, or loud clamor of drum and fife to awaken the echoes of the surrounding hills, and to startle the sea-lions from the sunny reefs hard by the abrupt and cruel shores. The only seaward sound falling upon our ear is the steady rush and beat of waves against basaltic walls. Why, then, are Joe and his three shipmates stranded here? This question the unread pages before us must answer.

On her way to the Pacific the Daybreak touched at two places on the east coast of South America, Rio de Janeiro and Montevideo. And so delighted was Joe with the first of these places, that he wrote Katie a long, and in some respects, wonderful description of it.

It must here be mentioned that just before leaving Bar Harbor, Joe worked his courage up to the point of asking Mr. Aston's permission to correspond with Katie during his cruise. And the readiness with which it was granted set his heart all a-flutter. What a contrast between the



BAY OF RIO DE JANEIRO, THE WONDER CITY OF THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE. *Page 411.*



outgoing cadet and the incoming cadet of two months before !

A number of letters had thus passed between Joe and Katie while the Daybreak lay at Norfolk ; but he had felt no such enthusiasm for writing as that which came upon him at Rio, the wonder city of the Southern Hemisphere. He wrote just one letter, however, to Katie from this point, costing so much for postage that she feared he would not be able to pay his next month's mess bill. It required just one thousand reis to send it. In the letter Joe showed Katie how the Brazilians express this enormous sum, writing it thus : 1\$000. He furthermore said that Harry, Schopy and himself had gotten breakfast on shore that very morning, for which they had jointly paid 10\$000 (reis). In her reply to this letter, Katie lectured Joe for being such a prodigal. She said if he kept on ordering breakfasts of that kind, he would soon be as hopelessly bankrupt as poor Schopy.

But the bulk of Joe's letter consisted of florid, cadet-like descriptions of natural scenery and conditions. "Think," he said, "of being in a place where the birds do not know there is any season but summer ; where the flowers never forget to blossom the livelong year ; where snow-flakes would astonish the children more than a fall of feathers from the wings of unseen angels." The account closed with the statement that beyond

doubt the earliest inhabitant of this region was Adam.

At Montevideo, however, Joe's first impressions of South America received a rude shock. No sooner had they come to anchor, than that almost omnipotent wind, the *pempero*, came booming down upon them. Men were swept from the top-gallant forecastle and drowned, boats carried away, and the ship herself well-nigh driven upon the beach. Nor was the passage to Magellan Straits much better. Huge seas, rolling up unobstructed from the pole, confronted them. Slowly as an Alpine traveler, the Daybreak toiled over them, taking weary weeks for what, with favoring winds, would have been a passage of not many days.

The first port they stopped at in the Pacific was Valparaiso. Little Chili at that time was bristling up behind her iron clads ; and it was thought the Daybreak's presence at her chief port might cool the temper of the saucy, pugnacious little power. One month was thus spent at Valparaiso, and they were off for Coquimbo, Callao and Panama. Three sweltering weeks were spent at Panama ; happy weeks, nevertheless, to Joe. Each week brought a long letter from Katie, and he would have cheerfully finished his cruise at the pole or the equator with such a reward as this. From Panama they flew as fast as wind and steam could drive them



to San Francisco ; and at San Francisco they were ordered to proceed with all dispatch to the Aleutian Islands for the protection of the seal fisheries.

No sooner had they reached these islands, than a busy life began. They were not only to warn off marauders from the seal rookeries, but to do surveying as well. But little of such work had been accomplished, and navigation among the islands was attended with considerable difficulty and risk. Mr. Moncrief was in his element. From morning till night he kept boats out, and the lead was in constant use. Old channels were more accurately defined, coast-lines and headlands more carefully drawn, and an extensive revision of the charts undertaken. In the work of sketching, Schopy's talent proved quite wonderful. Once fully occupied, he forgot all about his disaffection with the Navy, and sketched with admirable facility and skill. He had found his place for the first time during the cruise.

It was glorious among these cloud-compelling, fog-haunted, seal-inhabited islands, standing out on each clear day so wildly beautiful, so grandly solemn. Sailing among them was a never-ending delight. Of rare beauty were the scenes, often shifting as rapidly as views from a winding river. It was an ever-changing vision, colored with exquisite tints, varied in the oblique northern beams by long, fantastic shadows. Everybody felt that

glowing exhilaration which comes from such surroundings. Through these weird straits and passes, over these charming bays, appearing in the distance like land-locked lakes, along by rugged shores inaccessible as walled cities, past pretty harbors where, in the wildest tempest, the Day-break could have rested as quiet as a statue in its niche ; amid all this, as Joe expressed it in a letter to Katie, he could have sailed on and on forever. Though if Katie had received the letter she never would have believed it.

Then that most beautiful of volcanoes, Shishaldin ! How it awed and fascinated the cadets ! Joe declared, in the same letter, that it was worth a trip around the world to see. No wayward, unshapely peak is this. In fairest symmetry it rises eight thousand feet. It seems a mighty work of sculpture ; a monument of things long perished. How royally it stands forth, its lofty cone white with perpetual snow, its rounded base, washed on the south by the Pacific and on the north by Behring Sea, and clothed in richest green, its whole vast form taking on wonderful colors in the slanting ever-changeful summer light !

And of surpassing interest, also, to Joe, was the connection of this northern archipelago with great questions of history and science. For are not these islands the massive ruined piers of a once vast natural bridge ; a highway between continents ?

And was it not along this ruined way that the first stream of emigration flowed from Asiatic shores? These problems, with many other things connected with these islands, were matters of daily discussion and investigation with our young friends.

But our story must not longer be delayed. And if, upon joining our hero, his way may lead for a time into shadows, we must not allow him to travel it alone. If, as we have suspected, trouble has befallen him and the comrades at his side, we surely do not wish to pass it by. Our friends belong to us in their sorrows as well as in their joys; in the evil which casts them down as well as the good which lifts them up.

The Daybreak had finished her work, and was about to bid farewell to the Aleutian Islands. For this purpose she was making her way to the town above described. There she would take in such stores as could be obtained, and thence sail for Sitka. As night fell, she crept out from among a group of small islands into the safety of the open sea. Toward midnight one of the largest islands of the archipelago was upon the port beam. A moderate gale was blowing, and the ship was making twelve knots under steam and sail. She was carrying the fore storm-stay-sail, double-reefed foresail, and close-reefed maintopsail. A high sea was running, which could be heard pounding

wildly against the precipitous shore. The sky was somewhat overcast, but the moon and stars shone through. It was a bracing night, such as Joe loved to spend on watch. He was in the fore-castle, receiving upon his sou'wester with a smile, the showers of spray with which it seemed the Daybreak's delight to drench him.

Soon the wind had increased to such force that it became necessary to reduce sail. Joe had never seen the ship make such speed before. But he did not just like the roar of the sea over against the island whose frowning cliffs stood out quite clearly in the straggling moonbeams. It was with relief, a moment later, that he heard Captain Farradale, who was standing on the poop, give an order to starboard the helm. As the ship turned seaward, forgetting his slight uneasiness, he congratulated himself on the splendid run she was making. In a week's time, perhaps, she would be in Sitka. And then, and then, and then, letters from Katie! Never did barometer take such a leap upward as Joe's spirits at this thought.

Ten minutes to eight bells came, and Joe was ordered to lay aft to heave the log. Five minutes were occupied in this work. He reported a speed of thirteen knots to the captain and the officer of the deck. Marking it on the log, he resumed his station. The starboard watch now came tumbling up from below. Harry, who was

his relief, simultaneously appeared. Joe stood steadying himself, in the plunging of the ship, against the fore fife-rail. In this position he began giving an account of his watch to Harry.

Scarcely had a dozen words been spoken when there came a dreadful shock, such as can only be felt, never described. Upon a sunken rock, not down on any chart, the Daybreak had struck; struck as a locomotive strikes against some huge boulder fallen in the darkness upon its track. Like the noble animal in a Spanish ring sheathing the *espada's* sword in his fiery heart, the Daybreak had quickly met her fate, and lay in her death-throes upon the pitiless sea.

Joe was flung violently to the deck. Why he was not instantly killed it is impossible to say. The foretopmast snapped short off, and crashed within a foot of where he fell. A large mass of rigging came down all around him. Before he could regain his feet a sea broke over the bows, and swept him with tremendous force against a heap of *débris*, from which, with utmost difficulty, he extricated himself.

In abandoning ship he had been assigned to the captain's gig, and he now began to work his way aft. He saw that the ship was rapidly going down. All around him men were struggling to free themselves from the top hamper, which cumbered the deck along its whole length. It was a

terrible thought to Joe, that underneath it many of the crew must have already perished. A glance showed him the little chance the living had for escape. Every boat on the starboard side had been crushed by the falling spars and yards. On the port side, also, several of them had met the same fate.

A loud cry was raised, he knew not by whom, to abandon ship by any means. It had become evident that there could be no concerted, disciplined action. Men struggled for life-preservers, halyard racks—anything that came to hand. The few uninjured boats were cut away. With a great plunge the sailing launch went head foremost into the sea, filling in a twinkling. The other boats were thrashed so violently against the ship's side that nobody dared drop into them. The fear was, that they would go under with the ship, or be beaten in pieces against her side.

Our hero reached the after part of the ship. His courage freshened at the sight of Captain Farradale. Apparently he had not been hurt by the fragments of yards and spars that had fallen about him. He stood upon the poop, surveying in the now bright moonlight his shattered, sinking ship. He was making not the slightest effort to save himself. Joe climbed up to where he stood, and to his dying day, he will never forget the look that was on his face. Such sorrow was depicted

there, such pity for the brave officers and men now struggling in the face of death, that Joe's heart was wrung with anguish at the sight. And in it all not a thought had the captain seemed to bestow upon himself.

"What brought you here, Bently?" said the captain hastily, turning upon him the same look of pity.

"My station is with you, sir, in abandoning ship," replied Joe, in a choking voice.

"It's of no use now. You must save yourself in any way you can."

"I shall not leave you, sir."

"My poor boy," said the captain, with a look such as one gives in speaking a last farewell, "you cannot help me. It's every one for himself now. You haven't a moment to lose."

Suddenly Joe observed that, in his efforts to steady himself, the captain seemed to have no use of either arm. "Are you hurt, sir?" he asked anxiously.

"Yes ; my arms are broken."

This was terrible. It was indeed true ; both the captain's arms had been broken ; how, there was not time to relate. And not a sign of pain had the brave captain given, only of sorrow for the hapless ship's company.

Not an instant was now to be lost. Joe flung off his sou'wester, and with it, unconsciously, his

blouse. A glance told him that the gig, like most of the other boats, had been too badly damaged to be of use. He remembered that just under the break of the poop several life-preservers were stowed. He sprang to the deck, and snatching two of them from their places, was almost instantly back at the captain's side. His heart was well-nigh bursting as he realized the captain's utter helplessness. As soon as possible he placed one of the life-preservers upon him, strapping it securely. Throwing the other over himself, he assisted the captain to the starboard rail. Climbing nimbly over it, he braced himself to draw his helpless burden after him. One long look of affection Captain Farradale gave his undone little ship, and yielding to Joe's importunity, leaped with him into the sea.

Not a second too soon, for our hero, at least, had the leap been taken. But, ah, what followed! Even as they struck the water the ship went down; went down amid awful swirls and eddies with a mighty rushing sound. And as suddenly did Joe feel Captain Farradale swept away from his grasp, caught by a tangled mass of rigging and carried under with his ship. They had found a common grave.

In his grief, Joe loudly called his captain's name. It could not be that he was gone! He swam excitedly about the spot where he had dis-



appeared. Surely he must instantly reappear. Joe continued calling to him. Perhaps he had risen to the surface, and was hidden behind some floating portion of the wreck. For several minutes the well-nigh frantic cadet searched vainly among the drift, then gave up every hope.

All at once he caught a feeble voice speaking his own name. Could it be Captain Farradale's call?

No!

Quickly turning, he beheld in the bright moonlight, Dawson's upturned face. There was a look upon it which startled him. A few strokes brought him to the old man's side. Dawson lay on his back, struggling to keep afloat. Joe saw that he needed support, and instantly buoyed him in his arms.

"What, Dawson, are you hurt, too?" he exclaimed, with a fresh pang of grief.

"Yes; but I's not afeared. There's One above as won't be hard on me, sir."

"Oh! I'll get you ashore, Dawson," said Joe, thinking the old man was in despair over his disabled condition.

"I's driftin' to another shore, sir," solemnly said Dawson.

"No, no; it can't be, Dawson," said Joe, his voice broken with sobbing.

"I's done fur this time. I's felt all along as

somethin' was a-comin', an' now it's come. It don't matter, sir. In the course o' natur I hadn't long to stay. God bless you, sir," and Dawson looked tenderly at Joe.

"O, Dawson, Dawson!" was all that Joe could say.

"If you gits out o' this, sir, take a dyin' old sailor's blessin' to Miss Aston. Tell her I didn't forgit her pooty ways, an' the kind words she allers said to me. God bless her!"

"To think that such a cruel fate should have befallen you, Dawson," said Joe, in uncontrollable sorrow.

"It's all right, sir; I's not afeared. Would you mind sayin' a little prayer, sir?"

With Dawson's head resting against his shoulder the broken-hearted cadet fulfilled as best he could the old sailor's last request. A moment later, and as brave and true a heart as ever beat in human breast was stilled forever.

Was ever such tragedy as this enacted upon the sea! Joe fell back exhausted and in despair. He moved neither hand nor foot. He allowed the great waves to knock him about as they would. What mattered it now what he did? He cared little for his life. All hope seemed to have died in his heart. If he tried to reach the shore, would it not be only struggling against Fate? How much better to sink quietly down where Dawson,

and Captain Farradale, and doubtless Harry, Schopy, Arlington and many others had gone, to await the last great muster, at their side !

But there came a light into this darkness — a hope into this despair. A bright, sweet vision was flashed before his mind. It was the image of the one who so long had been mirrored in his heart. Never had that dear face seemed so kindly as now ; never had those sweet eyes seemed to fall upon him so tenderly. Yes, he would now make the bravest struggle for his life.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### A SUITABLE REWARD.

MONTHS passed, bringing no tidings to the friends in Portland from Joe. Meanwhile the papers had been closely watched, that no stray item touching the Daybreak might escape their notice. Katie was as familiar with shipping news as a city editor is with local incidents; and, in the continued disappointment of her search, thought what a foolish fellow Joe must be to prefer a life which involves such grave-like silence. And she determined, should chance ever throw him in her way again—and she began to fear that such an event would depend entirely upon chance—that she would forthwith recommend a change of professions. But the weeks dragged on and no word came from the cadet, nor from his good ship. For the first time in her life Katie experienced seasons of depression. Sometimes she even felt as Joe once had; that it was exceedingly probable that there would never be any direct communication between them again. So strange are these hearts of ours!

One morning, after this long interval of waiting, as Mr. and Mrs. Aston were breakfasting, Katie entered the room rather later than usual. Greeting her parents cheerily, and before taking her seat at the table, she picked up the hitherto neglected morning paper, to merely glance over the news.

All at once her father noticed that she had become very pale, and was trembling violently from head to foot.

"Why, Katie dear, what can be the matter?" he exclaimed in great alarm, hastening to her side.

"O, papa! just read that," was all she could say.

Much agitated, Mr. Aston took the paper from her trembling hand, and quickly read as follows :

## TERRIBLE OCEAN TRAGEDY.

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### PROBABLE LOSS OF THE UNITED STATES STEAMER DAYBREAK.

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SAN FRANCISCO, Sept. —. Captain Hemstead, of the bark *Helena*, reports that while passing the Aleutian Islands, on the 15th *ultimo*, he encountered a large quantity of wreckage. It bore evidence of having belonged to a man-of-war, and was very much broken up. Topmasts, yards and other wood-work were a mass of splinters. Several pieces of rigging were torn and twisted into every conceivable shape. The sea was littered with fragments of oars, boats, sails, etc. The ship must have thrown herself with terrific force upon some obstruction, probably a sunken, unmarked reef, making instant ruin of everything above the tops, and going down in a trice.

That the ill-fated ship was a war vessel was placed beyond doubt by the finding of an officer's blouse among the *debris*. It was fished up inside a sou'wester with which it had been hastily thrown off. The blouse had gold foul-anchors on the collar, and a narrow strip of braid upon the sleeve. Smith & Co., Tailors, Boston, was stitched on the inside of the collar. The garment is a part of the service-dress worn by naval cadets. A touching incident is connected with this blouse. In the pocket was found a blank envelope, containing a number of letters from the young officer's sister, or, more likely, his sweetheart. They are addressed, "Dear Joe," and signed "Katie." There is nothing else in them by which to identify either party. As the United States Steamer Daybreak was the only man-of-war known to be cruising among the Aleutian Islands, there is every reason for believing that she has gone down with all on board.

In silence Mr. Aston passed the paper to his wife, who had already guessed the import of the appalling news. Several minutes he sat without speaking a word. Katie had thrown herself upon the lounge in utter abandonment to her grief.

Could it be, he thought, that the cadet who, the last year, had so grown into the hearts of his friends, had perished in this dreadful manner? Sad, sad termination to their hopes for him—to the little that it had come in their way to do for him!

And then, poor Katie! For some time Mr. and Mrs. Aston had known of her love for Joe. They had placed nothing in its way. The fitness of its object they had well learned. It seemed to them, as Joe's fine character became more and more manifest, even desirable. In short, they regarded it as something that was to be.

And Katie's sorrow was now a very sacred thing to her parents. Their hearts melted with pity for her. Presently Mr. Aston went to her side, and gently stroking the fair head, spoke words of comfort to her.

"Katie dear," said he, "I own this looks very bad. But there's a little light in it all, and we won't give up hoping yet. I regard the finding of the blouse a good omen. Joe must have thrown it off to make his escape. A good Providence seems always to have been over Joe's life, and if that and a brave heart were of any avail, he will turn up all right. I feel that the One who notes the sparrow's fall has not forgotten Joe."

And Katie took heart at this.

Two weeks later came full particulars of the Daybreak's loss, with the names of the survivors. Lieutenant Bloomsbury headed the list. Then came the names of Joe, Harry and Coverly among the officers; and Long, Connors and some twenty others among the crew. It had been a frightful disaster; but do not the annals of the Navy record many such? A vast spectral fleet, the lost ships come sailing back to us upon the tides of memory. Through the long years they have been strewn over the floor of the mighty deep. Time has well-nigh obliterated the names of the heroes who perished with them, and their requiems have been lost from the sound of the sea; but, nevertheless,

a great multitude are they who thus sleep beneath the waves, waiting that morning of prophecy on which the sea shall give up its dead.

We left our hero determined upon making a great struggle for the life which, until Katie was imaged with such brightness before his mind, seemed of so little worth. But never did prospect appear more unpromising. With the appalling darkness that had enveloped his spirit, a corresponding darkness had fallen upon the sea. As if in melancholy consonance with the sad events already related, and immediately succeeding them, a mass of heavy black clouds swept across the face of the moon, leaving the ocean in well-nigh total eclipse.

Joe thought over his chances for escape. Two alternatives presented themselves. The first was to cling to portions of the wreck, and wait to be picked up by some passing vessel. The second to swim to the island, and trust to good luck for making a successful landing.

As no vessel would probably pass that way for many days, the first of these alternatives seemed quite out of the question. And at thought of the other, Joe's heart almost sank within him. Before the ship had struck, he had observed certain peculiarities in the coast-line of the island. It had presented an apparently solid wall. Not a sign of any opening had he been able to discover as far as



his eye could reach. What if there should be no friendly gateway leading to the inner shore? How, then, could he scale those steep and frowning heights? If natural stairway there should be, would not the waves grind him to powder upon its lowermost steps? But the only hope of escape seemed to him to lie in the keeping of this wild shore; and nerving himself for the struggle, he began swimming in its direction.

All this time something had been going on to which he had given no heed. He had been so stricken down with grief that he had lost sight of everything but the distressing circumstances with which he had been immediately connected. But for this he might have observed, though he had drifted quite a distance to leeward, that a number of the ship's company were struggling in the water, Harry and Coverly among them. And had he also listened carefully, he might have heard an officer's voice, calling upon all of them to follow him. That officer was Lieutenant Bloomsbury. He had escaped going down in the ship as by miracle. And once in the water he knew just what to do for the better safety of the survivors. He began looking around after the boats. Presently, way off to leeward, he caught a glimpse of one of the cutters — one of those already described as having been cut away. She was right side up, but not a soul was in her, and she was rapidly

drifting out of reach. The call he gave was to swim for her, and with Harry, Coverly and a half-score of able young fellows, he started in a race for life.

Slowly Joe swam on. He must economize his strength for the dangers of the coast. How sweet, under the magic wand that had touched his heart, life now seemed — how glorious the world! But, ah, that cruel shore! Dismay filled his soul as he thought of it. He had a mind to fall back upon the forlorn hope of being discovered from the deck of some vessel that might stray into these far waters. No, he would proceed!

But what was this? He had accomplished but a little distance when all within him was hope again. Suddenly a burst of silvery light illumined the sea, and with its coming the sound of voices and the click of oars broke upon Joe's ear.

The boat, then, had been reached and manned by the swimmers.

Why had not Joe thought of such a possibility as this? But people in shipwreck think of so few things! The wonder is, that they are capable of thinking intelligently. However, these glad sounds had surely come to Joe. In his joy he almost sprang up in the water. He felt as light as a sea-bird rising and falling with the waves. He uttered a loud cry. It brought the boat down upon him. Almost before he realized that she had reached

him, he heard the joyful exclamation from Lieutenant Bloomsbury, "Why! God bless us, it's Bently," and he felt strong hands laid upon him. A moment later he was with his shipmates in the cutter.

Several chapters would be required to enter into all the details of this terrible shipwreck. But a word or two in further explanation seems important. Of the officers in the boat with Joe, Lieutenant Bloomsbury, who was officer of the deck, had, like many others, become entangled in the fallen material and was held fast until a moment before the ship went down.

He had no sooner plunged into the sea, and taken a few strokes from her side, than she was gone. Coverly had barely reached the deck to pay his midnight visit to the sentries, when the shock came. Fortunately, he was not injured by any thing that fell from aloft. He worked for the relief of several men who had been pinned down among the *débris* till he was compelled to leave the poor fellows and jump for his life. Harry had not received a bruise. He sprang for the boat in which he belonged, in abandoning ship, and together with Conners and Long, managed to cut her away. But, as we have seen, it appeared certain death to them to attempt to board her from the ship. They had barely time to secure life-preservers on another part of the deck when the

final catastrophe came. No one who had turned in below, escaped. All access to the deck had been closed by the top-hamper, which had completely battened down the hatchways.

A dozen more of the crew were picked up by the boat. When it became certain that all the others were beyond the reach of help, they pulled for the land. The wind, meanwhile, had abated, and the sea had fallen considerably. The great barricade, more kindly than Joe thought, when, after a long pull, they got to it, opened to give them harbor.

Close on to the shore they found a deserted village. Many years before every inhabitant, from some cause or other, had abandoned the several towns of this island. In this village they took shelter, subsisting for two days upon wild fruits and a few stores that chanced to be in the boat. The third day they were taken off by a sailing vessel, which they had signaled, and conveyed to the town already mentioned. The officers were received into the house of the Greek priest, and the men cared for in the village. As if Joe had not endured enough, he was stricken down with pneumonia. One cold had succeeded another till this disease was fastened upon him. But his hardy constitution triumphed, and he recovered from his illness but little the worse for having experienced it. As soon as possible, for

communication with these islands was infrequent, Lieutenant Bloomsbury sent an account of the Daybreak's loss to the Navy Department. Upon receipt of the sad intelligence, a steamer was dispatched from San Francisco to bring back the survivors.

Late in October Joe arrived in Portland. The Aston carriage awaited him at the depot, bringing also his true friend. What a joyful meeting it was at Mr. Aston's home! How Joe colored as Mrs. Aston welcomed him with a hearty kiss. Katie did not follow suit, but she looked and spoke her gladness. The pleasure with which she received her hero was unmistakable. He had come back to her, as it were, from the dead. And their hearts well knew the secret which it had failed both tongue and pen to tell.

Katie led Joe into the drawing-room. She thought he glanced about a little uneasily, as though expecting an unwelcome presence. "Oh! Auntie isn't here now, Joe," she whispered, with a mischievous smile.

One evening not long after his arrival, Joe and Katie walked out into the moonlight under the big trees. Somehow the moon always managed to shine when Joe wanted it to. As we already know, he had a weakness for this luminary, and on this particular night, it seemed to him to be worth its weight in gold. He had somewhat to say to

Katie, and he did not want the sunlight staring him out of countenance when he said it. The live-long day the words had burned in his heart, fearing utterance. But he thought when the evening came, that he might tell her all out in the shadows of the great trees, with the moonlight shimmering about them through the still, thick canopy of leaves. A long time they walked about talking of many things, Joe's heart failing him the while. But at last, with a courage greater than that of him who taketh a city, he drew her to a rustic seat, and with the little hand lying all unresisting in his own, he asked her to be his wife.

"Did papa say you might ask me, Joe?" was the slow rejoinder, looking up into his eyes.

"O, yes!" said Joe, sealing the promise which shone in her sweet face with a happy kiss.

And thus we say good-by to Joe and Katie. Their hearts are one; life stretches away before them as a glorious sea upon which they are to one day voyage together. May few storms cross their path; and may they grow richer and richer in the tender love they bear each other, until they come to the quiet haven where we shall all drop anchor at last.

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